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Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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75¢

Ambrosio Ogumoro arrested

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

Police arrested last night former Department of Public Safety deputy commissioner Ambrosio T. Ogumoro for corruption charges, *Saipan Tribune* learned.

"Yes, Ambrosio is in jail," a lawyer confirmed but refused to elaborate.

Multiple sources disclosed that the arrest of Ogumoro was a result of an investigation conducted by the Office of the Public Auditor.

Sources said OPA then referred the case to the Office of the Attorney General's Investigation Unit.

See **OGUMORO** on Page 4

TCGCC accuses Tinian mayor of barring pay increase, sues



San Nicolas

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

The Tinian Casino Gaming Control Commission, its executive director, Lucia L. Blanco-Maratita, and commission inspector Lisa-Marie B. Aguon sued Tinian Mayor Joey P. San Nicolas and municipal treasurer Charlene M. Lizama yesterday for allegedly refusing to pay them the salaries that the commission increased in December.

TCGCC, Blanco-Maratita, and Aguon, through

See **TCGCC** on Page 4



Ogumoro

Speed, alcohol factors in Garapan car crash

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Traffic investigators have determined that speed and alcohol were factors in the car crash that left the driver and his two passengers seriously injured near the Garapan basketball court early Sunday morning.

Police Sgt. Tom Blas said that Joseph Aaron Hokin, the 26-year-old driver of the gray Ford F150 four-door pickup truck with license plate AEP 902,

See **SPEED** on Page 4

CHCC, CUC to discuss an 'acceptable' payment plan

By **JAYSON CAMACHO**
jayson_camacho@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. chief executive officer Esther Muña and other hospital executives will meet with

Commonwealth Utilities Corp. officials soon to discuss an acceptable payment plan after CHCC was found in contempt for not complying with a court order to pay

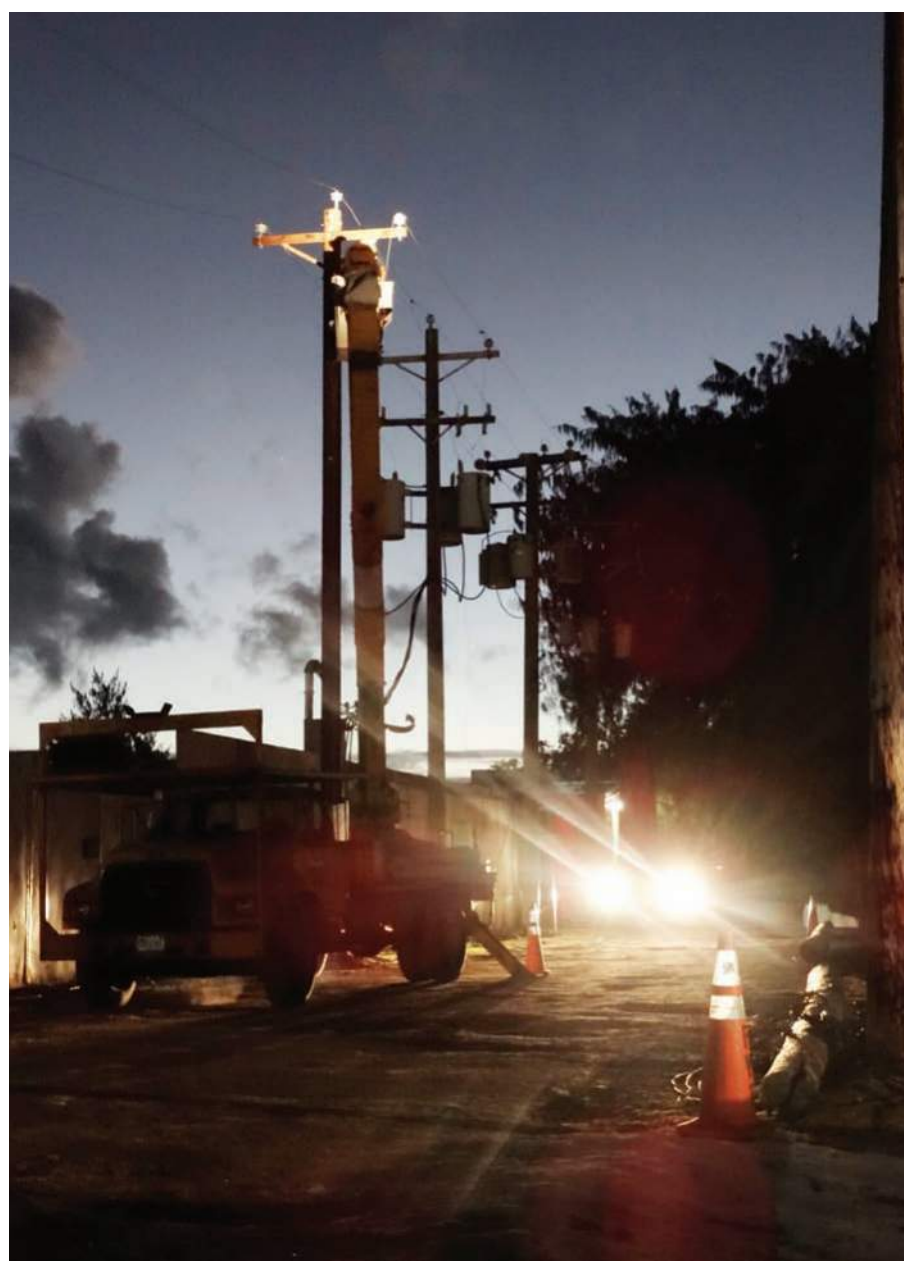
See **CHCC** on Page 4

» **CHCC agrees to disconnect some non-essential areas**

BRIEF OUTAGE

JAYSON CAMACHO

A Commonwealth Utilities Corp. crew works on two downed poles that were dragged down by a truck's crane, causing a brief power outage in the area near the TSL Sports Complex on Middle Road, Gualo Rai, yesterday evening. CUC Power Division manager Gary Camacho confirmed that there was a brief interruption in power services within the area but it was restored within four to five hours.



INSIDE



BUSINESS

More cash-strapped Americans are turning to tax refund advances.

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ASIA

Lee Kuan Yew, the founder of modern Singapore, died Monday. He was 91.

» PAGE 15



LIFE & STYLE

Italy unveils the restored crown jewel of the ancient city of Pompeii.

» PAGE 19



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Local

Lawmakers pay tribute to the late 'Mayor Toby'

A House commemorative resolution will be given to the family of former Northern Islands mayor Tobias D. Aldan today at the Kristo Rai Church.

Aldan passed away last March 16 at the Commonwealth Health Center at the age of 68.

The House resolution conveys "the sincere condolences and sympathy of the House of Representatives to Aldan on the occasion of his untimely passing and paying tribute to his service to the people of the Commonwealth."

The resolution, authored by Reps. Angel Demapan (R-Saipan) and George Camacho (R-Saipan) also pays tribute to the life and legacy Aldan, fondly called "Mayor Toby."

"In full accord with its longstanding traditions, this Legislative Body reflects on Aldan's distinguished career in public service and observes with pride the opportunity and

privilege of having served alongside an honorable man of character and vision who was committed to improving the conditions and opportunities for the people of the Commonwealth of the Northern Islands," the resolution reads.

Aldan served as mayor of the CNMI's northernmost municipality from 2010 to the end of his term in 2014. Born on Feb. 9, 1947, Aldan grew up on an island that was still recovering

from a war that changed both the geographic and social landscape of the Northern Marianas.

Aldan's desire to serve his islands "led to a 37-year career in government service, including working for the Department of Public Works, and as public relations officer for the Northern Islands Mayor's Office, a department he himself would eventually oversee."

(Joel D. Pinaroc)



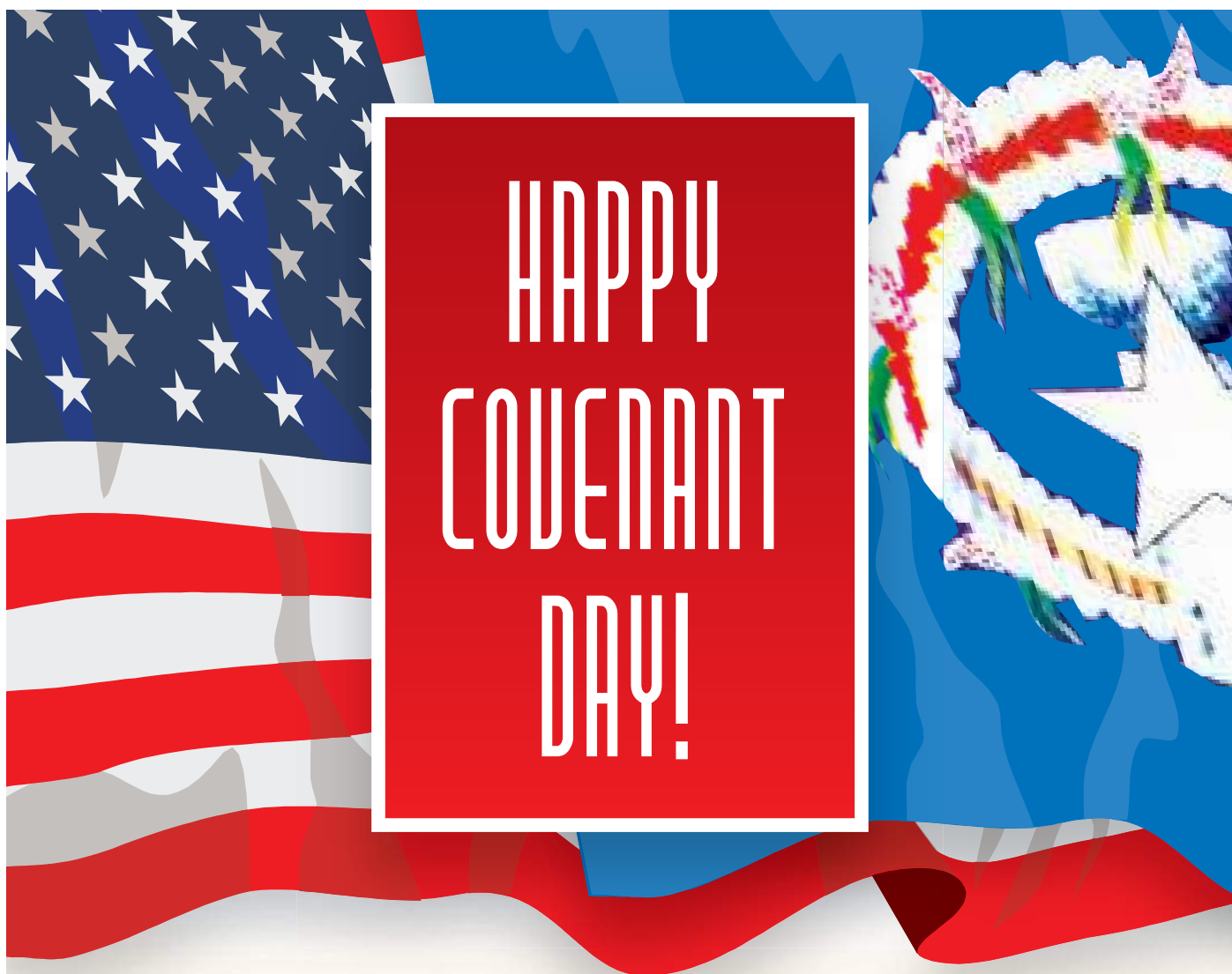
Aldan



SIGN OF HELP

The American Red Cross NMI Chapter's banner is displayed during Saturday's 29th Annual Red Cross Walkathon. The red cross on a white field is the international sign for medic. In battlefields and natural disasters, the Red Cross symbol gives those in need hope for rescue or medical attention.

JAYSON CAMACHO



Greetings from

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Waiter arrested for allegedly raping drunk friend

A restaurant waiter was arrested Friday night for allegedly raping a female friend who was intoxicated after their drinking session for her birthday celebration at her home in Garapan.

Mark Lester Presas David, 31, was arrested for sexual assault in the first degree, sexual assault in the second degree, as-

sault and battery, and disturbing the peace.

Police said David denied sexually assaulting the woman but admitted returning to her apartment and lying down next to her on her bed.

A doctor at the Commonwealth Health Center told police that examination indicated signs

of penetration and abrasions on the victim's sexual organ.

The alleged victim told police she never had any sexual experience before and that she was hurt and angry because she could not believe that David, whom she considers a friend, would do that to her.

At a hearing yesterday, Su-

perior Court Associate Judge Joseph N. Camacho imposed a \$50,000 cash bail and set the preliminary hearing on March 31, 2015 at 1:30pm.

Attorney Janet H. King was hired as counsel for David.

Police detective Therese S. Kintoki stated in her report that Sgt. Anthony Macaranas received Friday afternoon a text message from a friend about a rape incident. Macaranas proceeded to an apartment in Garapan, where he met the text sender and the alleged victim.

Macaranas reported the incident to the Department of Public Safety Central Dispatch. After a few minutes, an ambulance came and brought the woman to the hospital for examination.

Kintoki said that, according

to the alleged victim, she celebrated her birthday on Thursday night with David, a female friend, and a male neighbor. She said they were drinking liquor, eating a late dinner, and watching television. They finished at 2am, after which the alleged victim's visitors left, but the female friend told her that David would return.

At 3am, David returned, knocking on the door. She opened the door and when she saw it was David, she walked back to her bed and fell asleep because she was feeling intoxicated.

At 6am, the woman said she was awakened when she felt someone was touching her privates. She told David to stop, while kicking him and pushing

his face.

When David later left, she felt her legs were sore as well as her arms and private parts.

The alleged victim sent a message to David via Facebook, telling him she would report the matter to police and that she could not believe he would take advantage of her. She stated she never had any relationship with David, who would always joke around about her being his girlfriend.

She said she has no family on Saipan and was afraid because David has a lot of family on the island.

On Friday at 9:55pm, police arrested David and brought him to the Department of Corrections, where he was detained. **(Ferdie de la Torre)**

'Exempting officials from car window tinting unnecessary'

BY JOEL D. PINAROC
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REPORTER

A proposed bill seeking to exempt members of the Legislature from an existing law on car window tint is "unnecessary" and should be the "the very least of lawmakers' concerns," according to a couple of House representatives.

The Senate on Friday passed several bills, one of which is Senate Bill 19-28, introduced by Sen. Francisco Q. Cruz (R-Tinian). S.B 19-28 seeks to exempt vehicles used by elected officials from window tinting restrictions and government license plate requirements.

According to the proposed bill, "this will ensure that elected officials cannot be easily attacked while traveling on the road or in a parked vehicle."

For Rep. Edwin K. Propst (Ind-Saipan), however, "tinted

windows should be the very least of our concerns."

"I have serious problems with this bill that will exempt elected officials from car window tinting. If security is a concern, then why do we have no security up at the Legislature? Anyone can walk in to the House or Senate anytime. There is no screening whatsoever," Propst said.

The lawmaker added that while this may upset his colleagues in the Senate, "I cannot in good conscience support this bill."

"I do not feel comfortable supporting any bill that gives public officials special privileges over the very people we were elected to represent. As public servants, we must ensure that the same laws that apply to our constituents must also apply to us equally," Propst said.

DPH celebrates World TB Day

By JAYSON CAMACHO
jayson_camacho@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Division of Public Health under the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. is commemorating World Tuberculosis Day or World TB Day today, March 24.

World TB Day celebrates heightened public awareness of the global epidemic of tuberculosis and efforts to eliminate the disease.

DPH Medical Director Dr. Daniel Lamar said the CNMI is recognizing this significant day and wants everybody to be aware about TB.

"This will highlight the significance and the need to address TB that happens in the world, but most specifically addressing it to the community of the CNMI," he said.

According to Lamar, TB has been a known disease for about 100 years and is still pretty much around despite advanced treatment options for this disease.

Lamar said the prevalence rate for the U.S is about 3 per 100,000 but the prevalence rate is a lot higher in Third World countries.

He said TB is a serious infectious disease and is a threat to people's health around the world. It is mostly found in Asia and Africa and is a common cause of death in these two continents.

"Here in the CNMI, we had

a prevalence rate of about 100 new cases per year 10 years ago. Now we brought it down to less than 30 new cases per year. We have a high rate because Pacific Islanders and Asians such as those from China and the Philippines have some of the highest [rates]," he said. "We've done a great job in decreasing that number."

DPH has a program called "Stop TB" to deal with the challenges of TB and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention funds this program, he said.

Lamar said people who are most likely to get TB are those with diabetes, smokers, or any health problems that weaken the immune system.

Screening is possible at the Chest Clinic and is offered to anyone regardless of ability to pay, nationality, or status.

Prolonged symptoms of TB are coughing that doesn't go away, fever that may persist, coughing up blood, unexplained weight loss, or a weak feeling.

"If people think they may have TB, they can get screened. It's treatable and treatment is prolonged usually from six to nine months involving different procedures. They can call the Chest Clinic for more information if needed," he said.

For more information about TB and CHCC's Chest Clinic screening, call 236-8376.

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TCGCC

From Page 1

counsel Robert O'Connor and Rosemond B. Santos, alleged that beginning with the fourth pay period for fiscal year 2015, acting on San Nicolas' instructions, Lizama refused to issue paychecks to them and other affected employees in the amounts certified by the commission.

They alleged that Maratita, Aguon, and the other affected commission employees were paid only the amounts set forth for them in the Budget Act.

They asked the Superior Court to compel San Nicolas and Lizama to pay them and other affected employees their full salaries.

They also asked the court to invalidate three Tinian local laws that were enacted by the Tinian Legislative Delegation since 2004. Those three local laws are Tinian Local Law 14-1 enacted in 2004; Tinian Local Law 18-5 enacted in 2013; and Tinian Local Ordinance 18-3 enacted in 2014.

O'Connor stated in the complaint that Tinian Local Law 14-1 asserted the Tinian delegation's authority to amend the Tinian Casino Gaming Control Act—an initiative enacted by the people of Tinian—by local law.

O'Connor said Tinian Local Law 14-1 purported to amend portions of the Act re-

lating to the minimum size of hotels (which was reduced), the minimum age of casino employees (which was lowered), the amount of the casino license application fee (which was lowered by 97.5 percent from \$200,000 to \$5,000), the amount of penalties for late fees and taxes (which were lowered and made waivable), and the availability of credit wagers (which were changed from prohibited to permitted).

With respect to Tinian Local Law 18-5, O'Connor said it was purported to amend the casino taxes by eliminating the 1 percent monthly gross revenue surtax on each license, and replacing the former 12 percent gambling revenue tax with a two-tier tax rate of 5 percent on revenue from "high rollers" and 15 percent on revenue from lower-stakes gamblers.

The Tinian Local Ordinance 18-3, O'Connor said, is the Tinian municipal budget for fiscal year 2015, which establishes a total budget of \$781,902.42 for compensation of commission employees.

The lawyer said the budget also establishes a specific annual salary for each commission employee (including currently vacant positions) and prohibits the commission from increasing any such employee's salary, regardless of whether the total amount of compensation paid to commission employees remains with-

in budget despite an increase.

O'Connor said that in December 2014, the commission determined that it was necessary to raise the salaries of Blanco-Maratita, Aguon, and seven other employees for fiscal 2015. Yet the increased amounts were reflected only in the first three pay period of fiscal 2015, he said.

In plaintiffs' press statement, O'Connor said the lawsuit was filed in an effort to reassert TCGCC's independence and power to effectively regulate casino gaming on Tinian.

O'Connor said the lawsuit asks the court to declare that recent local laws enacted by the Tinian delegation attempted to amend the Tinian Casino Gaming Act in ways that would impair the power of commission to oversee gaming on Tinian and are either invalid or unconstitutional.

"The Tinian Gaming Act was designed to give to its commissioners independence from political interference and influence," said O'Connor, who is also the author of the Gaming Act back in 1987.

The lawyer said this is the reason why the Act gave the commissioners high salaries, limited each of them to one six-year term, and protected them from being fired or removed during their tenure.

"We wanted independent commissioners free from political pressures. Commissioners

do not need campaign contributions for their next campaign," he said.

What is happening now, O'Connor said, is applicants for licenses and licensees who cannot convince the commission on the merits of their proposal are instead going to the elected officials on Tinian and asking them to use the legislative process to force through changes the commission feels are unwise or inappropriate.

"Their recent Budget Act even attempts to tell the commissioners how much to pay each employee, whether to give them raises or not, and how much to pay their executive director. This is an indirect way to try and influence commission behavior," O'Connor said.

One result of the undermining of the commission, he said, is that the Tinian Dynasty Hotel & Casino is currently not compliant with the Gaming Act to such an extent that Deloitte & Touche has been unable to complete a required annual audit of its financial situation.

The audit was due last July.

O'Connor said local laws passed by the Tinian delegation are directly responsible for this noncompliance because they passed laws changing the tax structure by taxing premium players at a 5 percent rate instead of the Gaming Act's 12 percent rate without properly defining premium players or gross revenue.

He added that the delegation passed a local law to allow gambling on credit without properly

providing for how to trace back who got credit and whether they paid their debt or not.

AMBROSIO

From Page 1

Sources said the charges are theft of government property for personal benefit.

The charges stemmed from Ogumoro's alleged illegal use of DPS property such as computer or laptop when he served as deputy commissioner or acting commissioner at DPS.

Sources refused to disclose more details, saying the investigation is ongoing.

Ogumoro is expected to be taken to Superior Court for his initial court appearance today, Tuesday.

Ogumoro has a pending criminal case after OPA charged him with 15 criminal offenses for his role in, among other things, shielding then-attorney general Edward Buckingham from being served with penal summons

in August 2012.

Ogumoro has filed a petition asking the CNMI Supreme Court to restrain Superior Court Associate Judge David A. Wiseman from presiding over his criminal case.

Ogumoro, through counsel Edward C. Arriola, argued that Wiseman's decision not to dismiss the case for lack of jurisdiction is erroneous because there is neither a rational nor substantial legal argument to deny the CNMI Supreme Court's order.

In March 2013, as soon as he arrived at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport from an official trip to inspect rescue boats in Canada, then-DPS deputy commissioner Ogumoro was handed a termination letter and was subsequently placed under house arrest in connection with shielding Buckingham.

CHCC

From Page 1

its monthly bills, now totaling \$14.7 million.

Last Thursday, Superior Court Associate Judge David A. Wiseman gave the go signal for CUC to cut utility services to CHCC's "non-essential" services unless CHCC pays up or pays an amount that satisfies CUC.

CHCC was given 10 days starting last Thursday to file any objections to the list of "non-essential" hospital services that will be cut from the power grid.

Muña told *Saipan Tribune* that they gave the court a list of facilities and locations that they felt could be disconnected.

She assured, though, that no "critical patient areas" are on the list and many will remain open to the public and that all hospital patients will be fine.

Essential areas include the hospital, dialysis center, and other areas that the corporation deems critical for both patients and the community.

Muña said that some of the non-essential areas "were actually previously told to CUC and we did ask CUC to disconnect them before but they just never did."

It was earlier reported that CHCC's combined revenue for October, November, and December 2014 was \$6.8 million. In that same period, the hospital paid \$5.4 million in personnel costs and had \$1.5 million to spend on vendors, including non-medical and medical supplies vendors.

CUC was on the list of non-medical vendors that CHCC didn't pay because it said it wants to prioritize essential services that would benefit its patients the most.

Muña said they did want to pay and want to make sure that they make it affordable and acceptable to CUC and CHCC.

"We will ask the 19th Legislature to help us with this because, again, the \$2 million appropriated annually is insufficient to even run the hospital," Muña said.

In light of CHCC's challenges with utility costs, Muña supports a proposed bill in the House of Representatives, House Bill 19-36, that Rep. Ralph Yumul (Ind-Saipan) and other lawmakers introduced on Wednesday.

HB 19-36 seeks to appropriate up to \$4.2 million of lapsed funds from Business Unit No. 3490 to CUC for the payment of utilities for CHCC's outstanding \$14.7 million. According to Yumul, Business Unit No. 3490 refers to the Commonwealth Alien Deportation Fund that was created under Public Law 10-1. The fund was established by taking \$25 from every initial application fee and from every renewal fee for nonresident worker permits. It was meant to assist in the investigation, apprehension, detention, and deportation of illegal aliens. Yumul said the alien deportation fund has not been subject to legislative appropriations since 1996.

In a separate interview, CHCC advisory board chair Jack Torres said he hasn't talked with Muña yet but that they need to meet with her first and see the financial statements, which he said he hasn't seen for almost a year.

"I think that first we need to have an energy reduction plan and see if we can reduce our consumption. If there are areas that are essential or non-essential, we need to see those because there are so many factors to come up with and make recommendations and see how much are they really consuming and what areas we need to cut, but definitely not cut the hospital's areas," Torres said.

Both agree, though, that seeking Legislative appropriations is one of the hospital's best bets.



COURTESY CALL

ASAN, Guam—Rear Adm. Bette Bolivar, Commander, Joint Region Marianas, speaks with U.S. Ambassador to Palau Amy J. Hyatt at JRM Headquarters on March 6. Hyatt met with Bolivar, U.S. Defense Representative to Palau, during an office call before the ambassador departed for the Republic of Palau.

U.S. NAVY/TANYA M. CHAMPACO

SPEED

From Page 1

was cited for speeding, driving under the influence of alcohol, reckless driving, and for seatbelt violations.

Blas said Hokin sustained back pain but was soon released after being treated at the Commonwealth Health Center.

Blas said the two passengers were admitted to the Intensive Care Unit at CHC for

observation.

Jack Steven S. Deleon Guerrero, 22, sustained head and back injuries. *Saipan Tribune* learned that Deleon Guerrero is a firefighter with the Commonwealth Ports Authority.

Leilani S. Cepeda, 23, suffered facial and injuries to the lower extremities, according to Blas.

Blas said Hokin, Deleon Guerrero, and Cepeda were not wearing seatbelts at the time of the accident.

The Department of Public

Safety earlier mistakenly reported that the two passengers were females.

Police investigation showed that Police Officer Raymond Pangelinan called DPS Central Dispatch on Sunday at 3:12am to report a car crash on Beach Road in front of the Bank of Guam and Hard Rock Café traffic light intersection.

Medics also responded to the scene.

According to at-scene investigator Juan Mendiola,

the Ford F150 pickup truck was traveling south on Beach Road, Garapan, with witnesses saying the truck was traveling at high speed. As the truck approached the traffic signal light intersection, it somehow lost control.

The truck slammed into a steel post at the intersection, went off the road and hit a power pole, and eventually came to rest on the southbound shoulder.

Blas said the truck had extensive damage on all sides.

Radich, wife amend lawsuit over handguns prohibition

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

U.S. Navy veteran David J. Radich and his wife, Li-Rong, have amended their lawsuit and now includes Finance Secretary Larrisa Larson as co-defendant in their complaint that challeng-

es the constitutionality of the CNMI Weapons Control Act, which prohibits all residents from obtaining handguns for self-defense purposes.

The Radich couple, through counsels David G. Sigale and Daniel T. Guidotti, is suing Department of Public Safety

Commissioner James C. Deleon Guerrero and Larson for four counts of violation of their right to keep and bear firearms.

The couple said Deleon Guerrero is responsible for enforcing the CNMI's laws, customs, practices, and policies.

Larson, on the other hand, has

the authority of enforcing the prohibition on the importation of handguns into the CNMI, they said.

The Radich couple filed the amended complaint on Saturday in federal court after U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Man-

glona recently dismissed their lawsuit for lack of standing.

Manglona, however, allowed the couple to file until March 24, 2015, an amended complaint to include the handgun import ban.

To vindicate their Second Amendment right to bear handguns in self-defense, the Radich couple have a duty to establish their legal standing, the judge said.

Manglona said that because Deleon Guerrero cannot provide the full remedy the Radichs are seeking for their alleged constitutional injury, they must join the official in charge of enforcing the handgun import ban.

"Without that party, this court lacks subject jurisdiction," said the judge in granting Deleon Guerrero's motion to dismiss the complaint.

Deleon Guerrero, through the Office of the Attorney General, asked the court to dismiss the case because the plaintiffs' injuries cannot be redressed by a favorable decision—they lack standing.

Manglona agreed with Deleon Guerrero.

The judge said the court cannot rule on the import ban unless the official in charge of enforcement is named as a party in the lawsuit.

Manglona said in order for the Radich couple to obtain a handgun, they must necessarily import it or cause it to be imported into the Commonwealth.

In their lawsuit, the Radich couple asked the court to issue injunctions preventing Deleon Guerrero and Larson from enforcing against them the prohibitions on virtually all CNMI residents from obtaining handguns for self-defense purposes

and the probation on obtaining a Weapons Identification Card and possessing a firearm for self-defense purposes; and for good cause requirement for obtaining a WIC.

The couple asked the court to declare that the prohibitions are null and void because they infringe on the right of people to keep and bear arms, in violation of the Second and Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

Radich, who was born in California, is an honorably discharged U.S. Navy veteran who served in the Gulf War. He used to work at a public school on Tinian then moved to Saipan in 2008 to work for an environmental consulting firm. He and Li-Rong have been married since 2009.

According to the complaint, in 2010, while Radich was away and his wife, Li Rong, was at home alone, their home was invaded. Li Rong was reportedly attacked and beaten resulting in injuries, including two broken ribs, facial contusions, and a suspected broken orbital bone and eye socket.

Li Rong screamed out for help and caused the home invader to leave. She eventually recovered physically, but both plaintiffs incurred medical bills for Li Rong's care.

The couple applied for a weapons permit. To this day, no permit has been granted.

» **Finance**
Secretary
Larson is
named co-
defendant

'Covenant Day remains important for the CNMI's future'

The celebration of Covenant Day remains an important day for the CNMI, serving not only as a reminder of its history but also a reminder of what is in store for the Commonwealth in the future.

Today is the 39th celebration of Covenant Day.

"March 24, 2015, marks the 39th anniversary of our islands' finest moments. On that day, President Gerald R. Ford took pen to paper and, surrounded by federal officials and local

leaders, signed U.S. Public Law 94-241 into effect, entering the Northern Marianas into a 'covenant' of political union with the United States of America," Gov. Eloy S. Inos, in a statement, said.

"In the last 39 years, the Covenant has allowed us to elect our own leaders, set our own Constitution, and live in a society governed by the inalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

"It has seen us through good

times and tough challenges, and through it all, it has and continues to remain that which binds us in union with the United States of America," Inos said.

For Rep. George Camacho (R-Saipan), Covenant's Day is a reminder of the "choices made by our forefathers" that the youth of today should look at.

Camacho, who is also the House floor leader, said Covenant Day is also a way for CNMI residents and lawmakers

to "look back."

"The agreement is still intact, and in the last 30 years, we made significant progress," Camacho said.

For House Speaker Joseph P. Deleon Guerrero (Ind-Saipan), Covenant Day "is not just another holiday."

"There is a long history behind the Covenant, and we in the Commonwealth alone recognize this event which is unique to us," the lawmaker said. **(Joel D. Pinaroc)**

Kilili seeks \$7M for CNMI climate change programs

By **JOEL D. PINAROC**
joel_pinaroc@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A huge portion of the proposed capital improvements budget for the Northern Mariana Islands should go to existing climate change programs of the Commonwealth.

According to Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP), the Subcommittee on Indian, Insular, and Alaska Native Affairs examined last week President Obama's fiscal 2016 budget proposal for the Interior Department's Office of Insular Affairs.

The budget included \$9.6 million for capital improvement projects in the Northern Mariana Islands, a slight increase over fiscal 2015.

The budget also proposes \$7 million and two staff positions for a new Resilient Insular Areas fund to help island governments plan for climate change.

"In my view, this \$7 million could be better invested in existing programs that already address the causes and effects of



Sablan

climate change," Sablan said.

"For instance, the Interior's Empowering Insular Communities program, which has provided \$560,000 to the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. and \$440,000 to our

Public School System for solar power systems, help reduce the use of fossil fuels."

According to Sablan, more of this investment in locally produced power "would not only reduce carbon emissions that

cause global warming, but also keep more money in our local economy."

In February, the Obama administration pledged more support to insular areas through increase funding and more focus on climate change and manpower concerns.

Interior Secretary Sally Jewell said the Obama administration "will continue to listen" to the concerns of the insular areas.

She mentioned that the government does recognize that it needs to increase the \$30 million a year cap in funding for Guam and the CNMI.

The official also mentioned the issue of climate change, and that the federal government has allocated some \$140 million for ecosystem resilience.

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SMALL WONDERS

A wasp prepares to enter the nest it built on a sign going to Bird Island in Marpi.

JON PEREZ

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Only 8 work days left until CMS decides hospital's fate

By JAYSON CAMACHO
jayson_camacho@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. is counting the days until April 3, the date when the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Service will make a final decision whether to terminate the hospital's condition of participation with Medicare or conduct a resurvey.

Last year, CMS extended the hospital's condition of participation with Medicare up to April 3, 2015, with the plan of corrections to be submitted on Dec. 22, 2014. The hospital did another follow-up submission of its second corrective plans on Feb. 9 this year.

CHCC chief executive officer Esther Muña said she met with CMS regional administrator Stephen Chickering and CMS survey and certification manager Rufus Arther during her visit to the U.S. earlier this month.

"I did meet with CMS on my trip and did go over some of the corrective action plans. I did follow up on corrective action plans and they told us the good news that it was accepted," she said.

Muña said CMS at first did not accept the corrective action plans due to the Operating Rooms' temperature control issue.

"Having the facility part was difficult for us considering that CMS didn't want to accept the plan by waiting for the Heat Ventilation Air-condition or HVAC system project to be completed and it was unacceptable," she said.

"It was necessary for us to make changes to the building even while the project is ongoing because it became a concern of patient safety because of the

humidity level with our OR. There is a certain requirement for the humidity level that must be maintained when you have surgeries and basically we put an hourly monitoring so our staff and maintenance crew will go into the OR on an hourly basis to check on the humidity levels that is appropriate," she said.

Muña said the HVAC project is expected to be completed sometime in June this year. Considering that April was the deadline they gave CHCC, the corrective action plan could not be approved, so CHCC invested in additional air conditioners and humidifiers to

maintain the humidity level in the OR while waiting for the HVAC's completion date.

They told Muña the news of the corrective action plan's acceptance on March 3 upon her visit to San Francisco, California.

"They are still coming before April; they might be here this week or next. We're ex-

pecting them and I am praying that we're ready. One of the things I remind the staff, including our hospital administrator, is if you say you have a plan of correction, you follow it," she said.

"If they find something else, they will have a complete resurvey or termination, but I am not sure of that. It is possible that the hospital might be terminated or a complete resurvey may occur," she added.

» Hospital plan of corrections OK'd, CMS might do validation survey this week or next

PDM Promoters nets 1,560 lbs of trash

The PDM Promoters was at it again, cleaning up the Garapan tourist district early Saturday morning.

Some 11 Kinpachi Restaurant staff and seven of their children joined in the monthly cleanup.

The non-profit group's coordinator, Sonia Siwa, said they did their cleanup from 8am to 11:30am and collected about 1,560 lbs of trash.

Siwa said that they didn't have much volunteers on Sat-

urday because the 29th Annual Red Cross Walkathon was happening and the Saipan Awaodori members had joined the event.

They did some bush cutting and took out hard soil blocking the drainages along Coral Tree Avenue.

"Most of the trash and litter was from the earlier typhoon," Siwa said.

The group's monthly cleanup collects close to or more than 1,000 lbs of trash. (Jayson Camacho)



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Kinpachi staff, along with their children, clean up the Garapan tourist district on Saturday, collecting up to 1,560 lbs of trash.

LITS offers couples encounter event this Sunday

Life in the Son Saipan is offering a couples encounter event this Sunday, March 29, from 3pm to 9pm at the Kanoa Resort Seaside Hall.

Dubbed "How Deep is Your Love?" the event will be made up of two sessions: "Rightly Expressing Emotions" and "Identification of Love."

Mark and Terry Benavente will be leading the couples encounter. The two are directors of the Elijah House Guam as well as senior pastors of LITS Guam.

LITS Saipan pastor Eric Abragan is inviting married and non-married couples to join the event.

"We want to make this event

available to the public for married and not married couples out there. Singles are also welcome. This is one way of reaching out and be a blessing to the families, couples, and marriages in our community.

Participation in "How Deep is Your Love?" costs \$20 per person. To RSVP, call 285-4949, email lifeintheson-saipan@gmail.com, or visit 3Strands Christian Outlet in Gualo Rai (235-4438). The store is open from Monday to Saturday, 10am-7pm. RSVP on or before Thursday, March 26, as seats are limited. No childcare is provided during the event. (PR)

SCS hails Science Fair winners



Saipan Community School principal Bobby Winfield, left, and 6th grade teacher Faea Talalemotu flank the school's Science Fair winners while those in the front row hold the banner of sponsor Subway earlier this month.

Saipan Community School earlier this month feted the winners of the institution's Science

Fair during the school's Friday morning chapel time.

The overall winners were 7th grader Kate Ishida for the junior high division and 5th grader Hyeonbin Jeong in the elementary division.

Ishida won for her science project involving artificial reefs, while Jeong topped the division with a "Moneywise Consumers" science project.

SCS principal Bobby Winfield also thanked Subway for sponsoring this year's Science Fair.

The rest of the class winners and their science project topics are as follows:

3RD GRADE

■ Hans Xu (1st Place) - Plant Growth
■ Camille Sablan (2nd Place) - Plant Growth in Sunlight and Artificial Light
■ Derick Kwon (3rd Place) - Big Seeds vs. Small Seeds

4TH GRADE

■ Huiwon Jeong (1st Place) - The Sinking of the Paper Titanic
■ Michelle Ryu (2nd Place) - Potato Pimple Problem
■ Cloie Seo (3rd Place) - It's

So Dirty!

5TH GRADE

■ Hyeonbin Jeong (1st Place) - Moneywise Consumers
■ Seung Jin Paik (2nd Place) - Memories
■ Kevin Liang (3rd Place) - Which sound affects dogs most?

6TH GRADE

■ Mark Nam (1st Place) - Homopolar Motor
■ Jason Sablan (2nd Place) - Best Soda Cooling Method
■ Maxine Rabago (3rd Place) - Liquid Evaporation

7TH GRADE

■ Kate Ishida (1st Place) - Artificial Reefs
■ Jeffrey Seo (2nd Place) - Greywater Garden
■ Iris Lee (3rd Place) - Terminating Fire

8TH GRADE

■ Alex Chen (1st Place) - Does music help your memory?
■ Kevin He (2nd Place) - Can apples make other fruits ripen faster?
■ Eun Bi Hwang (3rd Place) - Which liquid makes Tylenol dissolve the fastest? (PR)

After Cyclone Pam, Vanuatu revives, rebuilds and rethinks

By **NICK PERRY**
ASSOCIATED PRESS

EFATE, Vanuatu (AP)—The roof from what was once the home of principal Melizabeth Uhi and her staff is now folded over branches high in the trees that border her school. She's now living with two other staff members in the only classroom that's still habitable. And she's running low on the rice she had before Cyclone Pam tore through Vanuatu a week ago, upending her life.

But Uhi is moving forward. She's helped organize a community cleanup of the Manua Centre School grounds on the main island of Efate on Monday, and is determined that her 314 students will return to school as soon as possible.

A week after the cyclone tore through the South Pacific archipelago with winds of 270 kilometers (168 miles) per hour, people are focused on the task of rebuilding.

The signs of progress are everywhere. The road that rings the main island is now accessible to all vehicles following temporary repairs to bridges, and the cell network that's vital to keeping people connected is gradually being restored on Efate and some other islands. On the sides of roads, crews have been repairing electricity lines and residents cutting tree trunks into fire-sized slices.

The task remains enormous.

Pacific community marks World Water Day

SUVA, Fiji—On March 22 each year, Pacific Island countries and territories pause to acknowledge and celebrate the importance of their fresh water resources to sustainable development.

However, with World Water Day on Sunday falling a little over one week since the region experienced a severe cyclone, the thoughts of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community and people across the Pacific are with those affected by tropical cyclone Pam.

The cyclone has left thousands with limited or no access to safe drinking water and sanitation, dramatically demonstrating the region's vulnerability to the water-related impacts of climate variability and climate change.

The extent of the drinking water and sanitation needs for those affected by the cyclone—in particular in Kiribati, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu—is being determined by their respective governments who are leading the response.

The World Health Organization and UNICEF recently estimated that around half the population of the Pacific has access to improved water supplies, while only one-third has access to improved sanitation.

That means, across the region, more than 6.6 million people continue to live without ac-



In this Saturday, March 21, 2015, photo, Melizabeth Uhi, a school principal, stands in front of her destroyed home at the Manua Centre School on the island of Efate, Vanuatu.

Many of the outlying islands still don't have any way to communicate with the outside world, while tourism, vital to the economy, has taken a huge hit, with many operators fielding call after call to cancel bookings. Throughout Vanuatu, many people remain worried about the most basic necessities: water, shelter and food.

About 65,000 people across Vanuatu were left homeless by the cyclone, which killed 17 people, said Osnat Lubrani, the U.N. humanitarian coordinator for the country.

Vanuatu and other small island nations face unique challenges in recovery due to their remote location and scattered populations, Lubrani said. Delivering services even when there isn't a crisis is hard and expensive, she said.

"So certainly in a time of disaster, that makes things very difficult," she said. "On the

positive side, I think people are extremely resilient."

Lubrani said the total price tag for the rebuild is still unknown.

Neighbors New Zealand and Australia quickly committed millions of dollars toward the relief effort. There's also been millions more committed by other countries, including France, the U.S., the United Arab Emirates and South Korea. Relief agencies are also moving enormous resources into the region.

But for people like Uhi, the school principal, the response can't come quick enough. She's

been given some tents by World Vision, but needs much more help, she said. Mothers have been coming by every day to ask when their children can return.

"There's a little bit of heartbreak," she said. "I really want the children to be able to go back to school."

The government has canceled all classes across the nation until March 30, although there's no guarantee the Manua school will be ready to open then.

For many people, small improvements are noticeable each day, whether in their living situ-

ation or their health.

At the main hospital in Port Vila, the capital, George Palap has been watching the progress of his 1-year-old nephew, Moses Sam. The family was on Tanna island when the cyclone struck in the early morning of March 14 and tore apart their homes. They ran for some nearby caves. Palap's sister Sampat, who was holding her infant, stumbled in the ferocious winds, he said, and the boy's head smacked into the ground.

The family made it to the caves, but Moses's wound was serious. Palap said his head swelled to twice its normal size and became infected. The Red Cross arrived by helicopter and took the boy to Tanna's airport, where he was flown to Port Vila, his uncle said.

The swelling has now gone down and Moses is doing much better, Palap said. There doesn't appear to be any permanent damage and the family hopes he can leave the hospital next week, he said.

For others, the cyclone has delivered an opportunity to make changes.

Lisau Manses was hanging laundry inside her house Saturday. The interior looked relatively normal—books on the shelves and crockery stacked in a cabinet. Missing entirely, however, was the roof, allowing the sun to shine in and dry her clothes.

Manses said she and her husband didn't think they would try to rebuild their coastal home, with its particular exposure to extreme weather. Instead, they are considering building a new home farther inland.

"We want to be out of the wind," she said.

Micronesian Voyaging Society donates to Palau college

The Micronesian Voyaging Society donated \$7,000 to Palau Community College on March 4, 2015. Members of the society that presented the donation were Ibedul Yutaka Gibbons, MVS president Shallum Etpison, Alan Seid, Tina Rechucher, and Ephraim Ngirachitei. PCC president Dr. Patrick U. Tellei received the donation on behalf of the college.

The Micronesian Voyaging Society is a group that promotes and supports non-instrumental navigation methods historically present in the Pacific island cultures. It continues to fundraise in order to maintain *Alingano Maisu*, a seafaring vessel used in the Non-Instrument Navigation Course offered at Palau Community College under the tutelage of Master Navigator Sesarior Sewralur. Master Navigator Sewralur has made numerous voyages to the neighboring Micronesian islands, including the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The society was created under the influence of Sewralur's father, Pius Mau Pialug, a master navigator from the Island of Satawal in Yap State.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

From left, Alan Seid, Ibedul Yutaka Gibbons, Palau Community College president Dr. Patrick U. Tellei, Micronesian Voyaging Society president Shallum Etpison, Tina Rechucher, and Ephraim Ngirachitei.

He sailed across the Pacific Ocean using the navigation skills and art that he learned from his grandfather. During his voyages, he would visit with the islanders and try to form a "bridge" between the islands. It was Pialug's wish

that the Micronesian Voyaging Society perpetuate his name so that they will serve as a lasting bridge between cultures making his dream of a "United Pacific Family" a reality.

It is the intent of the Micronesian Voyaging Society to pre-

serve and to perpetuate the cultural legacy of our people. The Micronesian Voyaging Society will dedicate itself to the perpetuation of traditional Pacific Islander methods of navigation, seafaring, way-finding, and predict weather conditions. (PCC)

PSS to host Islandwide STEM Fair this Saturday

» For the first time, public gets to vote for 'Viewer's Choice'

The 2015 CNMI Public School System Islandwide STEM Fair will be held this Saturday, March 28, at the Marianas High School Gymnasium. Participants from public and private schools, all grade levels, will be showcased in this annual competition. Each

school is allowed five entries.

Judging will begin promptly at 9am. The public is not allowed in the gymnasium while the judging is going on. However, there will be an open viewing around 11:15am until 12:30pm, after the judges have finished,

followed by the award ceremony about 1pm. The public is encouraged to attend. In fact, there is a new "Viewer's Choice" award this year. Every person is allowed one vote for their favorite project and that will be tallied up so that there will be an additional prize! *So, during the open viewing, cast your vote!*

Otherwise, students' projects will be judged and awarded first

to third place in grade clusters. The first place winners will represent the CNMI in the 37th Annual Guam Islandwide STEM Fair to be held in May at the University of Guam.

Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics—STEM for short—are subjects that develop problem-solving abilities and critical thinking skills. The STEM Fair has al-

ways been one of the best opportunities for students to explore and share their ideas. Through active inquiry students ask questions, make predictions, test their ideas, and communicate their findings. This active exploration helps students to come to a deeper understanding of key science concepts. By communicating their ideas, they develop presentation skills and self-confidence.

The goal is for the CNMI Public School System to provide an avenue for students to express their scientific creativity and problem-solving abilities while using 21st century skills. It should be the air for every student to apply critical thinking skills, to plan, to conduct tests, to analyze and to communicate their findings. Let's support our young scientists at work! (**PSS**)



UOG

From left to right: Dr. John Limtiaco (UOG), Kyle Caponpon (St. Paul Christian School), Jing Wang (Academy of Our Lady of Guam), Shelby Perez and Jessica Fernandez (Notre Dame High School), Yoo Na Choi and Lige Jiang (St. John's School), Paul Tominez and Tomoya Tisdale (Guam High School), Jeffrey Ochavillo and Tristan Paulino (Father Duenas Memorial School), and Dr. Maika Vuki (UOG).

UOG names winners of High School Chemistry Titration Competition

Twenty-eight students participated in 2015 University of Guam High School Chemistry Titration Competition, which was held on Charter Day, March 10, 2015, at the UOG Science Building. The participating schools included Harvest Christian Acad-

emy, Academy of Our Lady of Guam, Guam High School, St. Johns School, St. Paul Christian School, Notre Dame High School, and Father Duenas Memorial School.

The students competed in three categories: Best Laboratory Skill, Best Individual,

and Best Team. First, second, and third places were awarded for each of the categories. Prizes included gift certificates donated by the Office of the Senior Vice President and cash donated by L & K Communications. The competition was sponsored by the UOG

College of Natural and Applied Sciences.

Best Laboratory Skill

- First Place: Kyle Caponpon, St Paul Christian School
- Second Place: Jing Wang, Academy of Our Lady of Guam
- Third Place: Shelby Perez, Notre Dame High School

Best Individual

- First Place: Yoo Na Choi, St. Johns School
- Second Place: Jessica Fernandez, Notre Dame High School
- Third Place: Jeffrey Ochavillo, Father Duenas Memorial School

Best Team

- First Place: Jeffrey Ochavillo and Tristan Paulino; Father Duenas Memorial School
- Second Place: Yoo Na Choi and Lige Jiang; St Johns School
- Third Place: Paul Tominez and Tomoya Tisdale; Guam High School (**UOG**)

Guam gets nearly \$1.5M for priority projects

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Interior Assistant Secretary for Insular Areas Esther Kia'aina announced Friday nearly \$1.5 million in grant funding under the Office of Insular Affairs' Technical and Maintenance Assistance Programs to the government of Guam to support a number of priority needs identified by the governor.

A unique but exciting project will be the renovation of the Guam Seal historical park, where the scene depicted in the Seal of Guam will be recreated as a three-dimensional, interactive and interpretive display and transformed into the historical, cultural and educational site it was meant to be. Funds will also go to improving customs data management, training public auditors and violent crime prosecution investigators, and building capacity in the Office of the Chief Medical Exam-

iner. The University of Guam's Center for Island Sustainability, founded in 2009 to conduct research and recommend policies for building community resilience against the effects of climate changes, will also receive a portion of the funds.

"While we are not able to support all of Guam's identified needs, I am pleased to provide this initial support to the Governor's Office in these high priority areas," said Kia'aina.

■ **Living Seal Park Project:** \$273,054 to the Office of the Lieutenant Governor, as "Keeper of the Seal" to renovate the Great Seal of Guam Park. This project will develop the park into an interactive, educational, historical landmark, which also falls along the Hagatna Walking Trail that provides an educational walking tour of the historic landmarks in Guam's capital city.

"I am very pleased with [Fri-

day's] announcement approving these projects for Guam, and in particular our proposal to revitalize the Guam Seal Park," said Guam Lt. Gov. Ray Tenorio. "The funding will be used to upgrade the park with landscaping, bronze sculptures, benches and lighting, enhancing this landmark for our residents and visitors." Tenorio met with Kia'aina in Washington, D.C. attending the National Lt. Governors Association meetings.

■ **Customs Data Management System for Guam Ports of Entry:** \$626,000 to the Customs and Quarantine Agency of Guam for a new Customs Management System, critical to enhancing services, capturing vital data and increasing the level of security at Guam's ports of entry. The information captured by this new system will be used by government agencies for strategic planning in the fields of edu-

cation, health, social services, public safety, and infrastructure.

■ **Guam's Center for Islands Sustainability:** \$335,156 will support the University of Guam's Center for Island Sustainability, considered the tip-of-the-spear for environmental sustainability dialogue in the region. The CIS was launched six years ago to focus research, policy-making, and action on the immediate needs of the region facing climate change.

"The stability of people's livelihoods and island economies on Guam and in the Pacific depend on resiliency in all areas such as infrastructure, water and energy management," said Kia'aina. "We are pleased that such a center exists to help communities manage resources and develop resiliency."

■ **Public Accountability:** \$76,000 to the Guam Office of Public Accountability in part-

nership with the Office of the Inspector General to train and provide internship opportunities for existing audit staff.

"This funding supports a partnership with the Department of the Interior's Office of the Inspector General," said Kia'aina. "Through this program we build Guam's capacity to promote efficient and effective governance."

■ **Sexual Assault Investigation Training:** \$51,050 to the Guam Office of the Attorney General for Sexual Assault Investigation Training for Law Enforcement. The project will train officers in the methods and technological strategies for dealing with violent crime perpetrators and their victims. Funds will also be used to provide training in licensing and certification, and purchase mobile forensic equipment, which has the ability to retrieve, decode, and analyze information from devices such as phones and tablets.

"Communities [in] Guam must be safe from violent crimes such as sexual assault, child abuse and domestic violence," said Kia'aina. "We are pleased to support the Attorney General's Prosecution Division to help ensure that such crimes are sufficiently investigated and do not go unpunished."

■ **Support to Chief Medical Examiner:** \$71,808 to Guam's Office of the Chief Medical Examiner for the acquisition of a reliable specialized vehicle to be used by the office for the transport of deceased persons from crime scenes; procurement of surgical tools for the Chief Medical Examiner to perform efficient autopsies; and purchase of office computer equipment and furniture.

"The Chief Medical Examiner and staff need updated tools and resources to perform their work more efficiently and effectively," said Kia'aina. "I am glad that we can be of service." (**DOI/OIA**)

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MVA

AROMA, a family group raising funds for medical referral, collected 320 lbs of trash in March 2015, when they cleaned from Garapan Fishing Base to hotel street, including secondary roads, as part of the Marianas Visitors Authority's Beautify My Marianas program.

Beautify My Marianas open to medical referral groups

The Marianas Visitors Authority invites all families raising funds for off-island medical referral to avail of its Beautify My Marianas program, which offers \$100 for each 1-mile cleanup in assigned areas.

"We're pleased to announce

that Beautify My Marianas is open to most groups, including families seeking to raise funds for medical referral, school clubs, sports organizations, or other community groups," said MVA managing director Perry Tenorio. "We talk about how

tourism is everybody's business; Beautify My Marianas is one way residents can raise funds by directly supporting tourism by helping to keep our islands clean."

As of February 2015, 17 community groups have partic-

ipated in the program this fiscal year, collecting over 10,000 lbs of trash.

"Beautify My Marianas is just one of many destination enhancement projects of the MVA being funded through Public Law 18-1 and the hotel occupan-

cy tax paid by hotels," said Tenorio. "The MVA thanks all those community groups on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota that have partnered with us in this effort, and we will continue the program as long as the need exists and funding remains available."

For more information on Beautify My Marianas or an application, visit the MVA homepage at www.mymarianas.com. Groups must apply to participate and document their cleanup with a written report, list of participants, and photos. (MVA)



'Friends for Life' bond over island beautification

"Friends for Life," a group of high school friends, bonded again to join the Marianas Visitors Authority's Beautify My Marianas campaign on March 7, 2015.

"We started our cleanup this time at 7:30am since we would be cleaning for two miles," said the group in their after-action report. "Now we are nine people who are participating; one of our friends can't show up anymore. He has a stable job and we understand his situation."

The group collected 260 lbs of trash from Oleai Beach

to Sugar Dock, their second cleanup in recent months.

"We made ourselves tired picking up rubbish off the ground for two long miles, but it wasn't bad because we talked to [keep] ourselves out of boredom. There were no complaints. We collected 12 bags full of trash."

The "Beautify My Marianas" program offers \$100 for each 1-mile cleanup in assigned areas. For more information or an application, visit the MVA homepage at www.mymarianas.com. (MVA)

Friends for Life took time for some humor as they picked up trash from Oleai Beach to Sugar Dock on March 7, 2015, as part of the Marianas Visitors Authority's Beautify My Marianas program.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Ayuyu Battalion places third in leadership, academic challenges

On Feb. 12, 2015, eight cadets from Kagman High School's Ayuyu Battalion competed in the JROTC 5-Star General George C. Marshall Foundation Leadership Challenge and 5-Star General Douglas MacArthur Academic Challenge Bowl. This includes the entire 8th Brigade, which consists of 163 high schools from different locations including California, Hawaii, Alaska, Montana, Washington,

Oregon, Idaho, Nevada, Japan, Korea, Guam, and the CNMI.

It was a tireless effort that the two teams had to endure, consisting of many hours of practice, research, and hard studying during school and after school hours and they were able to see the fruits of their labor and dedication to finish third. This brings great credit to Kagman High School cadets and the Northern Mariana Islands. (PR)

The Academic Team is composed of, from left to right, cadet Capt. Philippe Lacson, cadet 2nd Lt. Lordina Pangelinan, cadet Staff Sgt. Mannelyn Cabrera, and cadet Sgt. Edson Valdisimo. The Leadership Team is composed of, from right to left, cadet 2nd Lt. Julie Loong, cadet 2nd Lt. Chelsea Isip, cadet Maj. Florence Buekis, and cadet Private Aldionne Maglanque.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Opinion

Hafa Adair!

Saipan Tribune

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EDITORIAL

Fall of the phenom

He was easily the most sophisticated person in the room. Surrounded by a gaggle of reporters at the 2012 Republican National Convention in Tampa, Fla., a tanned Aaron Schock in a tailored suit and stylish necktie breezily answered questions about Illinois and national politics.

Among the crowd of older Republican delegates preoccupied with the breakfast buffet, Schock represented promise for a political party teeming with backbenchers. He was considering a run for Illinois governor.

Throughout the convention, he served as a Mitt Romney surrogate on national talk shows. He was in demand. He was raising money for his fellow congressmen, volunteering his staff to campaign for them and building the network of payback any ambitious politician must assemble.

But none of that relationship-building can help him now.

Schock resigned from the U.S. House last week, acknowledging a scandal that was becoming a daily distraction for the 33-year-old phenom. By resigning, he dodged a congressional ethics inquiry into allegations he used taxpayer and campaign money to satisfy his jet-setting lifestyle, and that he over-reported mileage on his congressional vehicle to bulk up his federal reimbursements. This was after he was forced to pay \$40,000 from his own pocket to cover the cost of a lavish remodel of his Capitol office.

The drip-drip-drip of news stories during the last six weeks included questions about lavish trips to New York and London, concert tickets and helicopter rides, and questionable real estate deals with donors.

"I do this with a heavy heart," Schock wrote in his resignation letter, which his office released shortly after noon Illinois time. "Serving the people of the 18th District is the highest and greatest honor I have had in my life. ... But the constant questions over the last six weeks have proven a great distraction that has made it too difficult for me to serve the people of the 18th District with the high standards that they deserve and which I have set for myself."

There it was, the thud of his fast and furious fall from grace. By 3 p.m., his Wikipedia page already included his resignation, effective March 31.

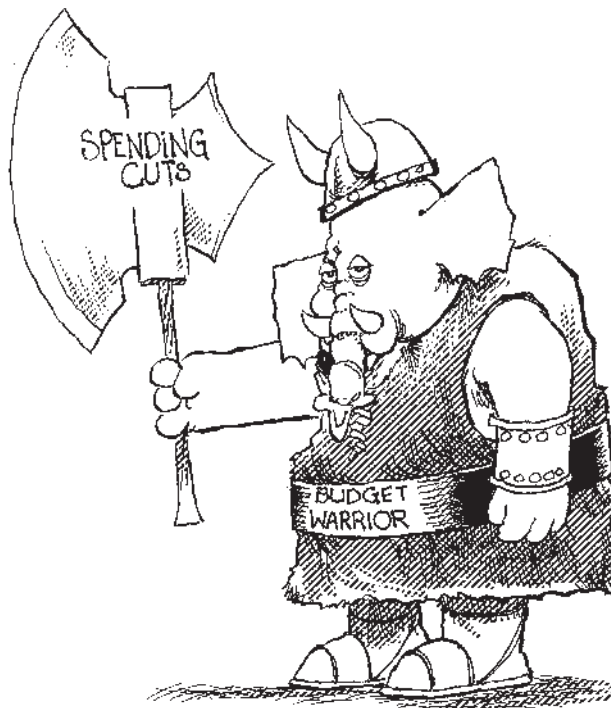
Congress and Illinois are losing a capable, ambitious, wonky wonder kid.

Throughout his rise in politics, Schock represented a blend of farm boy—he grew up growing and selling strawberries—and trendy hipster, someone who invests heavily in his appearance. Schock had the abs to prove it—which he once bared on the cover of a magazine, raising questions about his readiness for the big leagues.

His forgiving constituents looked past the lack of gravitas and continued to vote for him, starting when he was 19 years old and won a write-in campaign for the school board in Peoria, a central Illinois city and part of the district he represented in Congress. He then spent four years in the state House before heading to Congress at age 27.

But only a few years in, he began to doubt if Congress suited him. He struggled with the constant commute to Washington, and the demanding and restrictive schedule. He started to test public opinion, and donor support, for a gubernatorial bid. At that Republican National Convention, he was the wild card, working the room alongside then-Treasurer Dan Rutherford, state Sen. Bill Brady, then-state Sen. Kirk Dillard and, of course, governor-to-be Bruce Rauner.

See FALL on Next Page

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THE MYTH



THE REALITY

A return to China's isolationist past would be disastrous

Beijing increasingly appears to be walling China off from the outside world, with potentially disastrous consequences.

Take civil society. China's national legislature is considering a bill that would further restrict the operations of foreign non-governmental organizations, deepening the bitter chill that has descended on the operations of domestic and foreign nonprofits over the last year. Or look at the Internet. State authorities once confined themselves to censoring dissident voices. Now they are disrupting technologies such as virtual private networks that China's tech gurus and foreign companies rely on to access commercial sites abroad and to scale the so-called Great Firewall, which blocks sites the government doesn't want people to see. Higher education is another example. Universities that once thought themselves exempt from official pressure now are accused of facilitating the nefarious infiltration of "Western values" and are forced to fend off calls to ban or amend textbooks.

China is steadily drifting away from the reform path set in the late 1970s. Then, Deng Xiaoping opened China to the world, encouraging citizens to seek knowledge abroad. Today, Chinese leaders increasingly call for it to return to its own past.

But what period do they want to return to?

Historically, China's most glorious eras have been its most open ones.

During the cosmopolitan Tang (618-907 AD) and Song (960-1279 AD) dynasties, central Asian traders flocked to the imperial capital, Arab merchants to eastern seaports. China grew wealthy from trade. While medieval Europe remained wracked by purges against Muslims, Jews and all who dared challenge the ideological orthodoxy of the church, China was open to the world.

Innovation flourished: Gunpowder, paper currency and the navigational compass were all invented during this time. Emisaries from neighboring states streamed to China. Japan adopted Chinese writing and modeled its first capital after the Tang imperial court. Japan did this not because it was compelled to by force but because an open, self-confident China was one of the great centers of civilization.

Culture flowed the other way too. Foreign dance and music were imported from Central Asia, and beliefs such as Buddhism entered from India. These fused with China's indigenous traditions to become integral parts of a vibrant intellectual and cultural heritage.

Then there are the other eras, when paranoid imperial rulers lashed out at foreign influences and cut China off from the outside.

After the collapse of Mongol rule in the 14th century, Ming emperors briefly flirted with other cultures. But then they turned inward. They adopted a narrow ethnic self-conception. Mongol cultural influences were purged, foreign trade barred. Similar trends

By **CARL MINZNER**

Los Angeles Times

Carl Minzner is a professor at Fordham Law School, specializing in Chinese law and politics. He wrote this for the Los Angeles Times.



took place after the founding of the modern People's Republic of China. Communist leaders expelled Western missionaries, then Soviet advisors. China retreated back into splendid isolation.

Such measures helped repressive rulers strengthen their iron grip over society, but they crippled China. The Ming fleets that had begun to explore the Indian Ocean were called home and cut up for scrap, just as Spanish and Portuguese explorers set forth on their voyages of discovery. As the scientific and industrial revolutions rippled through Europe, China fell behind. And when Mao Tse-tung closed the nation off in the mid-20th century, the results were equally disastrous: decades of economic stagnation, mass famine (Great Leap Forward, 1958-60) and political chaos (Cultural Revolution, 1966-76).

Today, China's leaders have begun to tentatively steer their nation down a similar path. They could go yet further. Faced with a restless society, they could expel even more foreign journalists, further block cultural imports, sharpen attacks on "foreign" religions such as Christianity and Islam, and tighten their suppression of Uighur identity in Xinjiang province. They could stress a narrow concept of what it means to be Chinese, ram patriotic education through Hong Kong schools, and whip up nationalist sentiment among the discontented and underemployed youths flowing out of China's colleges.

They could also fuse Marx with Confucius to create a new ideological orthodoxy. And when populist anger begins to seethe over a slowing economy and widening divide between rich and poor, the government could redirect it at liberal intellectuals and economic elites to steer it away from central party officials.

But if they do all this, the results will be catastrophic. It would pit Chinese citizens against one another. It would shut down innovation and weaken China's influence abroad. And it would eventually turn on China's leaders themselves, many of whom see this danger all too clearly and are privately hedging against it by stashing their wealth and children abroad. In short, it would repeat precisely the same errors that generations of enlightened Chinese leaders—including Communist luminaries such as Deng Xiaoping—have sought to escape from.

EDITORIAL POLICY

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Political wrangling dooms victims of human trafficking

The idea that human beings can be treated like property is not new. It's as old as Pharaoh using the Israelites as tools to build his pyramids. It's as old as the slaves who were counted as three-fifths of a man by the Supreme Court of this nation. It's as old as the woman who, married to her rapist, could not claim injury because the law said you couldn't be charged with stealing something—a vagina—you already owned.

And, to those of us who've been bleeding with righteous anger since that same law made unborn children maternal property in 1973, the insult to human dignity marches on unimpeded. There is an unbreakable chord that connects the ancient to the modern, and even though many who use sophistry and clever words to hide the biological and moral truth of abortion will vehemently deny the connection (because they must,) it's clear.

Never was that more apparent than in the recent battle over another form of bondage: human trafficking. This past month, the U.S. Congress was presented with an opportunity to alleviate the suffering of people who are caught up in the widespread, deadly and extremely lucrative commerce in human lives. As an immigration attorney who has come in contact with women and children who've been trafficked, I have firsthand knowledge of the hell they've experienced both across international borders and—most shamefully—in our own country. It is abuse beyond imagining, degradation beyond belief and the most effective way to kill the fragile spirit of the most vulnerable.

The proposed bill, aptly named the "Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act" (JVTA) would have provided funding for the victims of a wide range of crimes that fall under the definition of "trafficking." Initially, it had full bipartisan support. That is, until a majority of the Democrats in the Senate realized that the bill would apply Hyde Amendment restrictions to the financial aid, and would bar

federal money from being used to fund abortions.

Actually, there was a fairly large exception to that bar, an exception that has existed for over four decades. Federal money can still be used to pay for abortions that terminate pregnancies arising out of rape or incest, or that endanger the life of the mother. This has always been the law, and the language to which the 41 Democrats objected simply extended it to the JVTA.

But the abortion lobby is a large and vocal one, and has the ear of the Democratic establishment. Once Harry Reid and his fellow Planned Parenthood groupies realized that they were voting for abortion restrictions, even though these restrictions had existed before a few of them could even spell the word "termination," the legislative express train heading toward justice for society's most vulnerable came to a screeching halt. It had hit the third rail: reproductive rights.

It was useless to try and convince the ideologues on the Left that banning federal funds for most abortions was as old as Nancy Pelosi's standing Botox appointment. If there is one thing that all liberals and most Democrats cannot stand it is the appearance of restricting any woman's ability to become "un-pregnant." Even though the proposed bill would still allow Uncle Sam to pay for abortions where the woman had been raped, which is always a big red herring raised by pro-choice activists, this wasn't enough for the Friends of Cecile (as in Richards.) They started yammering about how the Hyde Amendment is only supposed to apply to taxpayer money and that the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act would have included in its funding base criminal fines paid by convicted traffickers.

Here is the part where we start calculating how many angels are dancing on the head of a pin. Whether the money comes from John Q. Public on tax day, or whether it comes from a vile slave trader as part of his punishment, that money is "federal money." Therefore,

By **CHRISTINE M. FLOWERS**

Philadelphia Daily News

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the whole argument that the Hyde Amendment doesn't apply is a ridiculous, transparent and completely amateurish smoke screen set up by people who should know better. It also ignores the fact that, according to a recent Quinnipiac poll, 7 out of 10 Americans don't want their tax dollars paying for abortions.

To be fair, a few Democrats were embarrassed enough by the infantile antics of their colleagues and voted to advance the bill in Congress. I'm proud to say that our own senator, Bob Casey of Pennsylvania, was one of them (surely his dad is smiling in heaven,) as well as Heidi Heidkamp of North Dakota, Joe Manchin of West Virginia and Joe Donnelly of Indiana. Interestingly, there has been no gushing praise for these politicians who bucked their party and voted their conscience, unlike the situation where pro-choice female Republicans have blocked legislation which would have restricted abortion. Who am I kidding? It's not interesting. It's predictable.

Lost in all of this internecine wrangling are the true victims: the women, children and even men who have been sold into modern slavery and stripped of their dignity. Pawns in a power struggle between those who see all human life as valuable and those who need to pacify a demanding lobby, they are left without protection.

Pharaoh would be proud.

In Israel, fear-mongering secures win

Israelis are attributing Benjamin "Bibi" Netanyahu's surprise election triumph to the fact that he ran a "gevalt" campaign.

The Yiddish word *gevalt* is the equivalent of "Help!"—a cry for rescue at a critical time. And facing a possible defeat as voting day neared, Netanyahu wooed disaffected voters back to his right-wing Likud party by fear-mongering to the max.

He raised the specter of an Arab horde (Israel's Arab citizens) who were "voting in droves." He warned that his main opposition, the Zionist Alliance, would create a terrorist state in Jerusalem and "do the bidding" of the international community on settlements or peace talks. He said no territory would be returned to the Palestinians and there would be no Palestinian state.

Only he, Netanyahu, could stand up to Israel's enemies—who seem to include Israelis who didn't vote for him—along with his Western allies. But what if his *gevalt*-ing has worsened the real threats to Israel? To win the election, Bibi has boxed himself into positions and political alliances that could threaten the security of his state.

As of last week, Likud was in danger of losing out to the Zionist Alliance led by Isaac "Bougie" Herzog. Many Likudniks were less concerned about security than about economic problems, which Netanyahu wasn't addressing. Jewish settlers had left Likud and turned to radical right-wing parties that want to annex the West Bank.

To woo back the settler vote, Netanyahu reversed his previous acceptance of a two-state solution to the Palestinian issue. In reality, he had placed so many caveats on the idea that it was clear he rejected the concept. But his tactical acceptance enabled peace talks to continue for years.

Talks have broken down for many reasons, a key one being the continued expansion of Jewish settlements on the West Bank. Yet an official end to the peace process—the logical result of the *gevalt* campaign—would be dangerous to Israel.

As part of that process, Palestinian security forces on the West Bank work in close cooperation with Israeli forces to keep a lid on Hamas activists and any other nascent terrorist groups. That cooperation has been extremely successful in preventing any major terrorist attacks.

If the peace process formally ends, that cooperation will also end, meaning Israel will have to return in force to the West Bank. If the slim prospect of two states vanishes for good, there is a much greater likelihood that some Palestinian youths will be drawn to the kind of jihadi terrorism seen elsewhere in the region. The prospects for another war in Gaza also will rise.

A formal end to the peace process will also isolate Israel internationally, estranging it further from European Union members. So will an intensified push to build more Jewish settlements on the West Bank.

For these reasons, there is much speculation that Netanyahu may try to backtrack on his campaign positions. But although Likud won more seats than the Zionist Alliance, it has only 30 seats of the 61 it needs to form a governing coalition, forcing it to align with radical right-wing parties. They seek major settlement expansion, which will soon rule out any contiguous Palestinian state.

"The settlers see his victory as their victory, and they want to secure the eternal occupation of the West Bank so he will face a lot of pressure in his own coalition for greater settlement," says prominent Israeli columnist Nahum Barnea. There will be little support for Bibi to recalibrate his positions.

Under such circumstances, tension between Israel and the Palestinian Authority on the West Bank is bound to rise. The status quo can't last, but there's no sign that Netanyahu has developed a Plan B.

The Zionist Alliance, had it won, also probably would have been reluctant to give up territory in the midst of the current Mideast tur-

By **TRUDY RUBIN**

The Philadelphia Inquirer

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moil. But it would have tried to rein in settlement building so as to keep open the slim chance of a two-state solution in the future. This would have enabled the security status quo to last longer and prevented the further international isolation of the Jewish state.

On Iran, Bougie would also have pursued a much more nuanced policy than Bibi's.

While Israelis of all political stripes worry about Tehran getting a bomb, the many generals and former top intelligence officials aligned with Herzog disparage Netanyahu's breathless alarmism; they are cautious about the idea of bombing Iranian sites lest this accelerate Iran's march to a bomb and trigger a regional war.

Think of the Zionist Alliance's security policies as more akin to those of former President George H.W. Bush's team, while Likud's are now to the right of Bush 43, with the brashness of the new breed of Republicans typified by Arkansas Sen. Tom Cotton.

This raises the prospect of Israeli hawks and U.S. Republican hawks outbidding each other on Iran while fighting with President Obama—which could trigger a war that would boomerang on Israel. "Netanyahu now believes he alone holds the key to Israel's future and can confront Obama with the help of the Republicans," says Barnea.

Oy *gevalt*!

FALL

From Page 10

Schock toyed with the idea for months—and in so doing, raised millions for his campaign fund. He eventually decided against it, ran for another term in Congress and made a conscious decision to make the job more enjoyable. Schock traveled the globe during breaks, posted photos of his adventures on Instagram and developed a following of vicarious admirers on social media. He also negotiated his way to a seat on the influential House Com-

mittee on Ways and Means.

All that glamour and attention invited unprecedented scrutiny. Reporters started poking around and raising questions about his finances. Schock said he followed ethics rules carefully. He hired a team of experts to comb through his expenses—basically, a self-audit.

But if any of the allegations involving Schock hold merit, they would raise disturbing questions about his judgment.

Sadly, we've been here before.

Former U.S. Rep. Jesse Jackson Jr. admitted to mispending campaign funds and disguising that on his federal disclosure forms. He pleaded guilty to federal wire and mail fraud and is now impris-

oned; his wife, Sandi, will serve a term for filing false tax returns. They satiated their material desires on illegal spending sprees: flat-screen TVs, cruises, dinners, stuffed elk heads and even Michael Jackson's fedora.






Schock isn't accused of any crime. But greed, a force if not an offense, has no political affiliation. Said Socrates: "He who is not contented with what he has would not be contented with what he would like to have."

Schock desired political stature and achieved it. Now he's another once-rising star shamed by his lust.

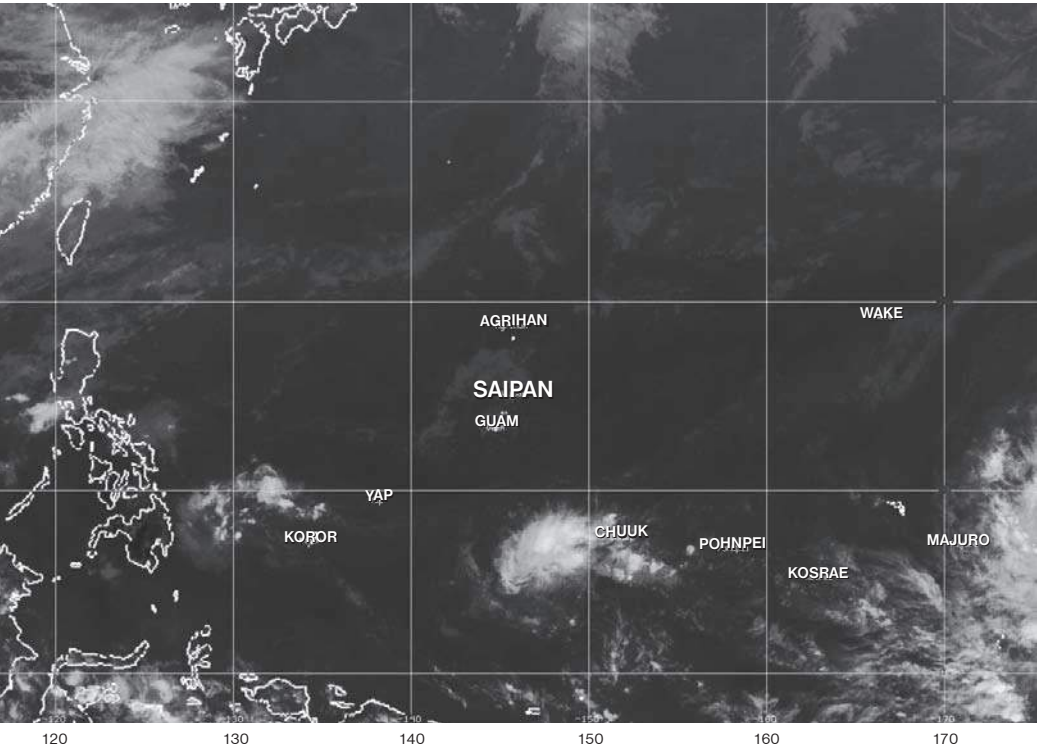
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The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				
Partly cloudy and breezy with a slight chance of showers. Northeast winds 15 to 25 mph.	Partly cloudy and breezy with a slight chance of showers. Northeast winds 15 to 25 mph.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers. Breezy during the daylight hours.	Mostly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers and thunderstorms.
▲88° ▼74°	▲88° ▼75°	▲86° ▼75°	▲86° ▼74°	▲86° ▼74°

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, MONDAY, MARCH 23, 2015

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A surface trough curves west-southwestward from 25N145E to 21N140E to beyond 130E at 20N. Cloudiness and patchy rain are along and up to 150 miles north of this trough. A weak circulation near 8N131E is triggering scattered showers just west of Yap and Koror or west of a line from 10N136E to 6N130E. Another weak circulation southwest of Chuuk near 6N149E is causing scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms between 8N and 5N from 146E to 150E and within 50 miles of a line from 7N150E to 5N154E. A trade-wind disturbance is producing scattered showers and a few thunderstorms just east of Majuro to the east of a line from 1N180E to 3N175E to 10N173E and scattered showers between 10N and 15N from 173E to 180E.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

Micronesia			
Guam And Rota	Partly Cloudy	▲85	▼77
Palau	Showers	▲89	▼77
Yap	Thunderstorms	▲83	▼76
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	▲87	▼79
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	▲88	▼78
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	▲88	▼78
Majuro	Rain	▲84	▼80

Around the Globe			
Auckland	Showers	▲73	▼62
Beijing	Sunny	▲65	▼36
Hong Kong	Cloudy	▲73	▼65
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	▲83	▼69
London	Partly Cloudy	▲53	▼40
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	▲73	▼56
Manila	Partly Cloudy	▲89	▼73
Melbourne	Mostly Cloudy	▲62	▼50
Miami	Partly Cloudy	▲88	▼70
New York	Mostly Sunny	▲39	▼26
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	▲50	▼37
Paris	Mostly Sunny	▲58	▼38
Pusan	Sunny	▲55	▼37
Rome	Partly Cloudy	▲63	▼50
Salem	Rain	▲53	▼43
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	▲63	▼52
Seoul	Sunny	▲56	▼30
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	▲56	▼40
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	▲49	▼33



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- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

Tides			
Saipan Harbor			
5:32 AM	Today	Low Tide:	0.6 Feet
11:03 AM	Today	High Tide:	2.0 Feet
6:03 PM	Today	Low Tide:	-0.1 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset		
Today	6:19 AM	6:29 PM
Wednesday	6:19 AM	6:29 PM
Thursday	6:18 AM	6:29 PM
Friday	6:17 AM	6:29 PM
Saturday	6:16 AM	6:29 PM

Moonrise/Moonset		
Today	9:19 AM	10:20 P M
Wednesday	10:11 AM	11:16 PM
Thursday	11:03 AM	
Friday	11:55 AM	12:10 AM
Saturday	12:46 PM	1:00 AM

Note: Blank spaces indicate that a rising or a setting did not occur during that 24-hour interval.

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 5, 2015

DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA5070	4:15am	5:05am	Daily	UA5069	2:45am	3:35am	Daily
UA5068	8:00am	8:50am	3	UA5071	6:40am	7:30am	3
UA5068	8:40am	9:30am	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7	UA5071	7:15am	8:05am	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7
UA5039	2:20pm	4:00pm	6, 7 via Rota	UA5039	1:00pm	1:50pm	6, 7
UA5078	3:10pm	4:00pm	1, 5	UA5038	1:10pm	2:40pm	2, 4 via Rota
UA5038	3:10pm	4:00pm	2, 4	UA5077	1:50pm	2:40pm	1, 5
UA5040	6:55pm	7:45pm	1, 5	UA5041	5:35pm	6:25pm	1, 5
UA5078	8:35pm	9:25pm	2, 3, 4, 6, 7	UA5077	7:15pm	8:05pm	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA5044	10:40pm	11:30pm	1, 5	UA5043	9:20pm	10:10pm	1, 5
SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)				GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)			
UA5039	2:20pm	2:55pm	6, 7	UA5038	1:00pm	1:35pm	2, 4
ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)				ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN			
UA5039	3:25pm	4:00pm	6, 7	UA5038	2:05pm	2:40pm	2, 4
SAIPAN-PALAU (ROR)				PALAU (ROR)-SAIPAN			
DL287	6:05am	1:10am+1	2, 6 via NRT	DL298	4:35am	3:00pm	3, 7 via NRT
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)				NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
DL287	6:05am	8:40am	1, 2, 4, 5, 6	DL298	10:25am	3:00pm	Daily
DL297	4:20pm	7:05pm	Daily	DL288	8:55pm	1:25am+1	1, 3, 4, 5, 7
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)				SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN			
OZ606	2:10am	6:00am	1	OZ603	9:00am	2:20pm	Daily
OZ606	2:40am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	7C 3402	10:10am	3:30pm	Daily
OZ6063	3:20am	7:10am	3, 4, 6, 7	OZ605	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ604	3:20pm	7:10pm	Daily	OZ605	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
7C 3401	4:30pm	8:20pm	Daily	OZ6053	8:50pm	2:10am+1	2, 3, 5, 6
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)				BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN			
OZ608	3:10am	6:20am	4, 7	OZ607	9:00pm	1:50am+1	3, 6
SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)				SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN			
3U8648	6:00am	8:35am	1, 4, 5, 7	3U8647	10:30pm	4:30am+1	3, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)				BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN			
MU764	1:30am	5:30am	1, 4, 5, 7	MU763	4:30pm	12:30am+1	3, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)				GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN			
3U8646	4:30am	7:30am	2, 6	3U8645	7:55pm	3:10am+1	1, 5
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
OZ606/701	2:10am	11:15am	1 via ICN	OZ704/603	12:10am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
OZ606/701	2:40am	11:15am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN	PR110/UA5041	7:35am	6:25pm	1, 5 via GUM
UA5069/PR111	2:45am	4:50pm	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM	PR110/UA5077	7:35am	8:05pm	3, 6, 7 via GUM
UA5070/191	4:15am	7:20am	2, 7 via GUM	PR110/UA5043	7:35am	10:10pm	1, 5 via GUM
UA5070/191	4:15am	9:00am	3, 6 via GUM	DL172/288	9:40am	1:25am+1	1, 3, 4, 5, 7 via NRT
UA5070/183	4:15am	8:45pm	2, 5 via GUM	UA190/5077	9:55am	8:05pm	2, 7 via GUM
UA5070/183	4:15am	9:10pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM	UA190/5077	10:00am	8:05pm	3, 6 via GUM
DL287/275	6:05am	9:35pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 6 via NRT	OZ702/605	12:30pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
UA5071/PR111	6:40am	4:50pm	3 via GUM	OZ702/605	12:30pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
UA5071/PR111	7:15am	4:50pm	1, 5, 6, 7 via GUM	UA184/5071	10:55pm	7:30am+1	3 via GUM
UA5068/183	8:00am	9:50pm	3 via GUM	UA184/5071	10:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA5068/183	8:40am	9:30pm	2, 5 via GUM	UA184/5039	10:55pm	1:50pm+1	6, 7 via GUM
UA5068/183	8:40am	9:50pm	1, 4, 6, 7 via GUM	UA184/5038	10:55pm	2:40pm+1	4 via GUM-Rota
UA5039/183	2:20pm	9:50pm	6, 7 via Rota-GUM	UA184/5077	10:55pm	2:40pm+1	1 via GUM
UA5038/183	3:10pm	9:30pm	2 via GUM	UA184/5041	10:55pm	6:25pm+1	1 via GUM
UA5078/183	3:10pm	9:30pm	5 via GUM	UA184/5077	10:55pm	8:05pm+1	3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA5078/183	3:10pm	9:50pm	1 via GUM	UA184/5043	10:55pm	10:10pm+1	1 via GUM
UA5038/183	3:10pm	9:50pm	4 via GUM	UA184/5071	10:59pm	8:05am+1	2, 5 via GUM
OZ604/703	3:20pm	11:00pm	Daily via ICN	UA184/5038	10:59pm	2:40pm+1	2 via GUM-Rota
				UA184/5077	10:59pm	2:40pm+1	5 via GUM
				UA184/5041	10:59pm	6:25pm+1	5 via GUM
				UA184/5077	10:59pm	8:05pm+1	2 via GUM
				UA184/5043	10:59pm	10:10pm+1	5 via GUM
SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)				HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN			
OZ606/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN	OZ746/603	12:30am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
OZ606/723	2:10am	12:50pm	1 via ICN	OZ750/603	1:10am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
OZ606/721	2:40am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN	OZ722/605	1:15pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ606/723	2:40am	12:50pm	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN	OZ724/605	2:20pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
UA5070/179	4:15am	10:35pm	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM	OZ722/605	1:15pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
UA5068/179	8:00am	10:35pm	3 via GUM	OZ724/605	2:20pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
UA5068/179	8:40am	10:35pm	1, 5, 6 via GUM	UA180/5071	10:55pm	7:30am+1	3 via GUM
UA5039/179	2:20pm	10:35pm	6 via Rota-GUM	UA180/5071	10:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 5, 6 via GUM
UA5078/179	3:10pm	10:35pm	1, 5 via GUM	UA180/5039	10:55pm	1:50pm+1	6 via GUM
OZ604/749	3:20pm	10:30pm	Daily via ICN	UA180/5077	10:55pm	2:40pm+1	1, 5 via GUM-Rota
				UA180/5041	10:55pm	6:25pm+1	1, 5 via GUM
				UA180/5077	10:55pm	8:05pm+1	3, 6 via GUM
				UA180/5043	10:55pm	10:10pm+1	1, 5 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U: Sichuan Airlines; MU: China Eastern; UA: United Airlines; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana; 7C: Jeju AirETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

TINIAN TO SAIPAN			SAIPAN TO TINIAN			SAIPAN TO ROTA		
DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
7:00AM	7:15AM	Mon, Tue,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat	7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily	7:45AM	8:15AM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
			8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily			
7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily	9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily	4:00PM	4:30PM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily	10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily			
9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily	11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily			
10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily	12:00NN	12:15NN	Daily			
11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily	1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily			
12:30NN	12:45NN	Daily	2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily			
1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily	3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily			
2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily	4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily			
3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily	5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily			
4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily	6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily			
5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily						
6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily						

ROTA TO SAIPAN		
DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
8:30AM	9:00AM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
4:45PM	5:15PM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat

Business

More cash-strapped Americans turn to tax refund advances

WASHINGTON (AP)—Cash-strapped Americans anxious for tax refunds are increasingly turning to payment advances, prepaid cards or other costly services when getting tax preparation help, according to new federal data raising concerns among regulators about whether consumers are fully informed about the fees.

Regulators are looking to increase oversight of preparers amid the rise in “refund

anticipation checks,” a type of cash advance especially popular among low-income families who receive the Earned Income Tax Credit, the government’s \$65 billion cash benefit program. The advances are being marketed as a way to get fast refunds or defer payment of tax preparation costs.

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau says some consumers have complaints about refund anticipation checks cen-

tered on advertising, quality of service or fees.

The bureau is finalizing the first rules on prepaid debit cards, including those for tax refunds, that would require “easy to understand” disclosures upfront about costs and risks.

Refund anticipation checks rose to roughly 21.6 million in 2014, up 17 percent from 2011, according to IRS data provided to The Associated Press. About half the purchasers are EITC recipients; roughly 84 percent are low-income, according to the data. Industry analysts project the payment advances and their fees will become more widespread as tax preparers seek to boost revenue.

Currently, refund anticipation checks and prepaid cards make up 10 percent of industry giant H&R Block’s revenue and more than 20 percent of Liberty Tax Service’s, according to earnings reports.

Both companies said they are committed to providing consumers with the information they need to make tax-filing decisions, including use of refund anticipation checks. They said the payment advances offer added value, such as convenience.

The Internal Revenue Service has been pushing Congress for new authority to regulate the \$10.1 billion tax preparation industry after an appeals court last year barred it from requiring tax preparers to undergo background checks and testing.

“It’s the wild, wild West,” said Nina Olson, the IRS’ national taxpayer advocate, describing the current state of the industry. She called the level of risk for abuse in pricing and quality of



AP
In this March 21, 2015 photo, Brittney Freison, dressed as Lady Liberty, waves to motorists near the Liberty Tax Service office in Berea, Ohio.

Netran Washington, 40, a materials handler in Cleveland, says he’s been going to a neighborhood tax preparer for four years, eager for a fast refund. Washington readily agreed when asked if he preferred to pay for the tax preparation later.

Washington says he was later surprised by a \$500 fee that included the cost of a cash advance.

Still, he kept going each year until a friend suggested the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program, an IRS program providing free tax preparation services to low-income families. The IRS-certified tax preparer found a filing error that had cost Washington \$1,000 in unused tax credits and helped him file an amended return. “It was very upsetting,” Washington said.

Four states—California, Maryland, New York and Oregon—require preparers to undergo training. The California attorney general’s office recently requested information from H&R Block about its refund anticipation checks, which range in cost from \$34.95 to \$59.95; at issue may be whether the fees may be subject to strict truth-in-lending laws, the company said in financial filings. H&R Block emphasized that it was a request for information, not a lawsuit.

Consumer groups in Colorado and Ohio are pushing proposals to require greater disclosure.

service unprecedented.

The National Association of Tax Professionals supports certification of providers to ensure a minimum level of competency. But the Institute for Justice, which filed the lawsuit against IRS, says new licensing requirements and other oversight aren’t the answer.

“We should do more to increase competition, not drive

independent tax preparers out of the market,” said Dan Alban, an attorney for the group.

The average tax-preparation fee for 2014 returns is \$273, up 11 percent from two years ago, according to a survey by the National Society of Accountants. But there’s wide variation, with fees of \$400 or more, according to the National Consumer Law Center.

My typing drives co-worker crazy

YOUR OFFICE COACH

By MARIE G. MCINTYRE
McClatchy-Tribune News Service

Marie G. McIntyre is a workplace coach and the author of *Secrets to Winning at Office Politics*. Send in questions and get free coaching tips at <http://www.yourofficecoach.com>, or follow her on Twitter @officecoach.



Q: I am having a lot of issues with my new co-worker. “Pamela” used to work with both my boss and the owner of our business at another company. The three of them have remained friends and frequently go out to lunch together.

Even though I have been here for seven years, Pamela doesn’t seem to value my experience. Whenever I try to help her or explain something, she pays no attention to me. She has also convinced the owner to change some of our long-standing policies.

Although I love my work, I have been very unhappy since Pamela arrived. I don’t want to leave, but I no longer feel supported by my managers. What do you think I should I do?

A: On an emotional level, your unhappiness is understandable. After working closely with your bosses for many years, you are suddenly confronted with an unwelcome interloper who is also their personal friend. This could easily make you feel displaced, resentful and even jealous.

If you think about it rationally, however, you will hopefully see that your colleagues are not actually doing anything wrong. In a small, privately-owned business, people with ties to the owner frequently have greater access and influence. That may not seem fair, but it’s a fact.

Jumping ship is always an option, but since you enjoy your work, perhaps you should first make an effort to adjust to this new reality. Once you modify your own attitude and approach, you may find that others react favorably and

relationships improve.

For example, you say that Pamela rejects your offers of assistance, but you don’t say whether training her is your responsibility. If it is not, her chilly response may indicate that she views your comments as interference. If you stop giving advice and simply try to be a friendly colleague, Pamela may eventually respond in kind.

Q: One of my co-workers gets extremely irritated whenever I type on my computer. She will turn up the volume on her radio, slam things on her desk, curse at me under her breath and occasionally start singing in a loud voice. I have done everything in my power to type more quietly, but that is almost impossible. How can I resolve this?

A: Based on your description, your hyper-sensitive co-worker is immature at best and mentally disturbed at worst. But regardless of the reason for her disruptive behavior, you should not have to put up with it. Instead of meekly continuing to placate this eccentric woman, give her one clear warning before going to management.

For example: “Mary, we both know that typing is a normal part of my job and that I can’t control the sound of my keyboard. Your angry reactions are interfering with my work, so I need for this to stop. Otherwise, I will have to ask management to intervene.”

If the harassment continues, make good on your promise and talk with your boss or human resources manager. This woman sounds a little unbalanced, so someone in management needs to know about her peculiar behavior.

Greece fights German bailout demands with Nazi-era claims

BERLIN (AP)—It was 1943 and the Nazis were deporting Greece’s Jews to death camps in Poland. Hitler’s genocidal accountants reserved a chilling twist: The Jews had to pay their train fare.

The bill for 58,585 Jews sent to Auschwitz and other camps exceeded 2 million Reichsmark—more than 25 million euros (\$27 million) in today’s money.

For decades, this was a forgotten footnote among all of the greater horrors of the Holocaust. Today it is returning to the fore amid the increasingly bitter row between Athens and Berlin over the Greek financial bailout.

Jewish leaders in Thessaloniki, home to Greece’s largest Jewish community, say they are considering how to reclaim the rail fares from Germany—with seven decades of interest.

“We will study the law and do our best to claim,” the community’s president, David Saltiel, told The Associated Press.

Such a move would suit the new government in Athens, which is trying to shift the public focus from Greece’s current debt crisis to Germany’s World War II debts ahead of Monday’s first visit to Berlin by Greece’s new Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras.

While war reparations have been a staple demand of previous Greek governments, Tsipras’ radical left government has made the issue a central part of the bailout negotiations with Germany. The Germans have dismissed such demands, saying compensation issues were settled decades ago in post-war accords.

Billions of euros in rescue loans from other European countries and the International Monetary Fund have saved Greece from bankruptcy since 2010. Germany, the largest contributor to the bailout, has been vocal in pressing Greece to cut back on government spending to bring its finances

under control.

But the Greeks point out that, following its wartime defeat, Germany received one of the biggest bailouts in modern history within a decade of laying waste to much of Europe. Greece was among 22 countries that agreed to halve Germany’s foreign debt at a 1953 conference in London.

Even some German politicians have called for a change of heart on the reparations issue. They argue that if Germany doesn’t confront its World War II guilt, it cannot expect other countries to repay their more recent debts. The point has particular resonance in Germany because, in German, guilt and debt are the same word: Schuld.

Among the claims that Greece, or individual Greeks, might bring against Germany:

- Tens, possibly hundreds, of billions of euros (dollars) in present-day money as compensation for destroyed infrastructure and goods, including

archaeological treasures, looted by the Nazis from 1941 to 1944.

- Compensation for the estimated 300,000 people who died from famine during the winter of 1941-1942.

- Compensation for the slaughter of civilians as reprisals for partisan attacks. One of the most infamous massacres took place in the Greek village of Distomo on June 10, 1944, when Waffen-SS soldiers killed more than 200 women, children and elderly residents. Another in Kalavryta in December 1943 involved German troops killing more than 500 civilians, including virtually all of the town’s males aged 14 or over.

- Repayment of some 1.9 billion drachmas, around 50 million euros (\$55 million) today, that the Jewish community paid as ransom to occupying authorities in 1942 in return for 10,000 Jewish men being held as slave laborers. The men were released only to be sent to concentration camps the following year.

Nation

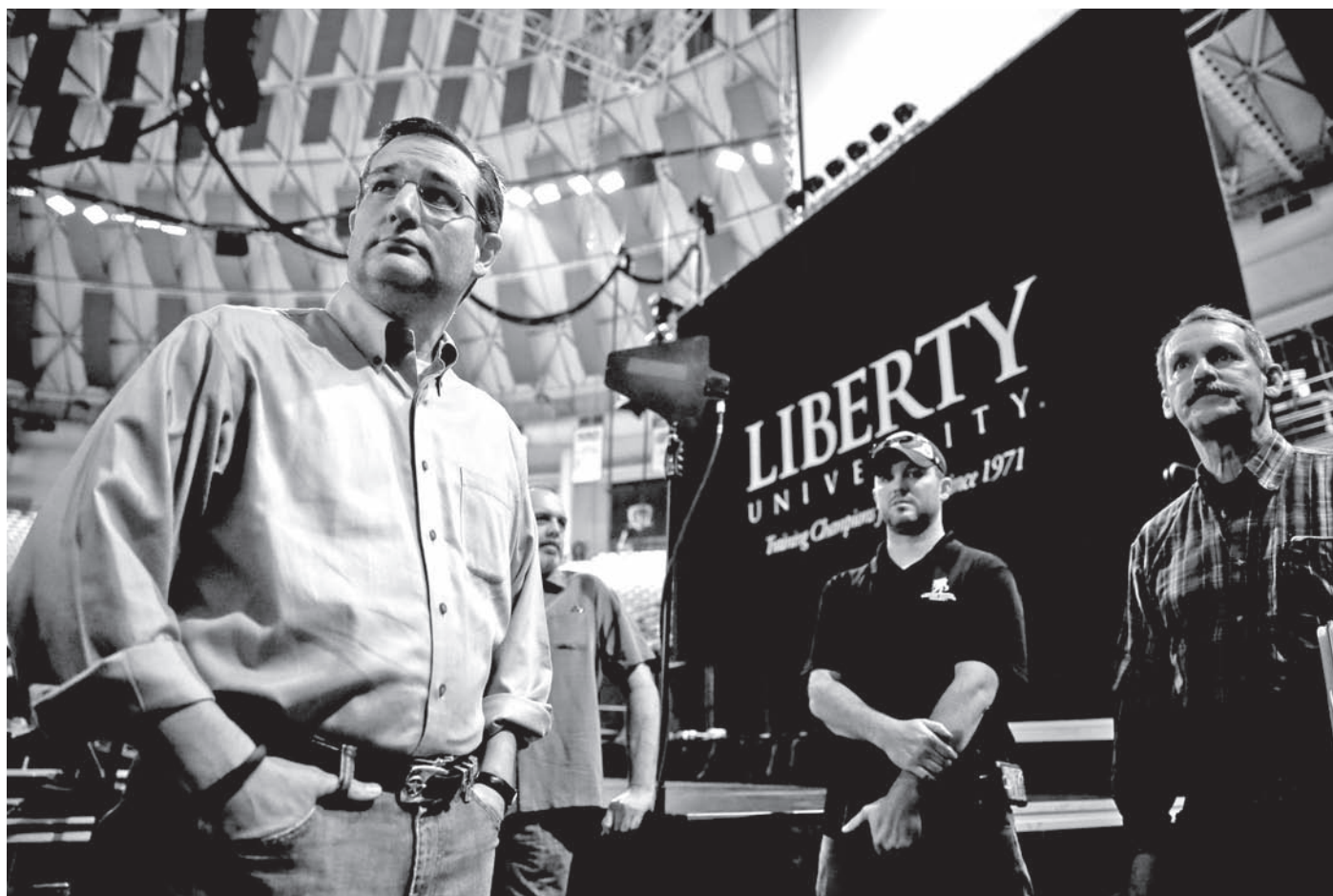
Cruz to become first major candidate to jump into 2016 race

WASHINGTON (AP)—Texas Republican Sen. Ted Cruz will become the first major candidate for president when he launches his campaign Monday, kicking off what's expected to be a rush over the next few weeks of more than a dozen White House hopefuls into the 2016 campaign.

Cruz will formally get into the race during a morning speech at Liberty University in Lynchburg, Virginia, choosing to begin his campaign at the Christian college founded by the Rev. Jerry Falwell rather than his home state of Texas or the early voting states of Iowa and New Hampshire. It's a fitting setting for Cruz, a 44-year-old tea party darling whose entry into the 2016 campaign drew cheers Sunday among fellow conservatives.

"The official Republican pool of candidates will take a quantum leap forward with his announcement tomorrow," said Amy Kremer, the former head of the Tea Party Express. Cruz's announcement, she said, "will excite the base in a way we haven't seen in years."

Elected for the first time just three years ago, when he defeated an establishment figure in Texas politics with decades of experience in office, Cruz has hinted openly for more than a year that he wants to move down Pennsylvania Avenue



Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas, left, meets with staff and coordinators during a walk-through for his Monday morning speech where he will launch his campaign for president of the United States at Liberty University on Sunday, March 22, 2015 in Lynchburg, Va.

from the Senate and into the White House. His plans were confirmed Sunday by one of his political strategists, who spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity so as not to upstage the announcement.

While Cruz is the first Repub-

lican to declare his candidacy, he is all but certain to be followed by several big names in the GOP, including former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush, Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker and two Senate colleagues, Kentucky's Rand Paul and Florida's Marco Rubio.

The Houston Chronicle first reported details about Cruz's campaign launch. His move puts him into pole position among those whose strategy to win the nomination counts on courting the party's most conservative voters, who hold an

outsized influence in the Republican nominating process.

"Cruz is going to make it tough for all of the candidates who are fighting to emerge as the champion of the anti-establishment wing of the party," said GOP strategist Kevin Madden. "That is starting to look like quite a scrum where lots of candidates will be throwing some sharp elbows."

ACROSS THE NATION

Human remains found in Alaska, may be tied to missing family

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP)—Human remains found along an Alaska trail may be connected to the disappearance of a family of four missing since May, Kenai Police said Sunday. The family's disappearance prompted massive searches led by Kenai police with help from the FBI. The searches turned up no clues. Relatives said at the time it appeared the family had left without packing. Their two vehicles remained parked outside their apartment and their rent for June had not been paid. On Saturday, a person driving down a west Kenai trail spotted clothing and what appeared to be human remains, police said in a statement. Responding officers found remains and items reported missing from the home of Rebecca Adams, 23, and her boyfriend, Brandon Jividen, 38. They were last seen May 27, the day after Memorial Day.

California man facing terrorism charge writes to newspaper
SANTA ANA, Calif. (AP)—

Following his election to the Senate in 2012, the former Texas solicitor general quickly established himself as an uncompromising conservative willing to take on Democrats and Republicans alike. He won praise from tea party activists in 2013 for leading the GOP's push to partially shut the federal government during an unsuccessful bid to block money for President Barack Obama's health care law.

In December, Cruz defied party leaders to force a vote on opposing Obama's executive actions on immigration. The strategy failed, and led several of his Republican colleagues to call Cruz out. "You should have an end goal in sight if you're going to do these types of things and I don't see an end goal other than irritating a lot of people," said Utah Republican Sen. Orrin Hatch.

Such admonitions mean little to Cruz, who wins over crowds of like-minded conservative voters with his broadsides against Obama, Congress and the federal government. One of the nation's top college debaters while a student at Princeton University, Cruz continues to be a leading voice for the health law's repeal, and promises to abolish the Internal Revenue Service and scrap the Department of Education if elected president.

Last weekend in New Hampshire, one voter gave Cruz a blank check and told him to write it for whatever amount he needed.

'They were so pure,' father says of 7 kids killed in fire

NEW YORK (AP)—An ultra-Orthodox Jewish community shattered by the deaths of seven siblings in a house fire carried out their funerals Sunday, a day after a hot plate left on for the Sabbath is believed to have sparked the fire that killed them.

The tragedy had some neighborhood Jews reconsidering the practice of keeping hot plates on for the Sabbath, a common modern method of obeying tradition prohibiting use of fire on the holy day.

The bodies of the children from the Sassoon family, ages 5 to 16, were being sent to Isra-

el after the funeral for a prompt burial. Flames engulfed their two-story, brick-and-wood home in Brooklyn's Midwood neighborhood early Saturday, likely after a hot plate left on a kitchen counter set off the fire that trapped the children and badly injured their mother and another sibling, investigators said.

The service at the Shomrei Hadas funeral home began with prayers in Hebrew, accompanied by the wailing voices of mourners. They could be heard through speakers that broadcast the rite to hundreds of people gathered outside on

the streets in traditional black robes and flat-brimmed hats.

"They were so pure," Gabriel Sassoon said of his children during a eulogy he delivered through sobs. "My wife, she came out fighting."

Both his surviving wife and a daughter—Gayle Sassoon and 14-year-old Siporah Sassoon—remained in critical condition on respirators.

"My children were unbelievable. They were the best," he said, calling them "angels."

Earlier at the family's firegutted home on Bedford Avenue, a police officer stood guard as contractors boarded

up windows with plywood.

The blaze killed three girls and four boys—all members of the neighborhood's tightknit community of ultra-Orthodox Jews. Authorities identified the victims as girls Eliane, 16; Rivkah, 11; and Sara, 6; and boys David, 12; Yeshua, 10; Moshe, 8; and Yaakob, 5.

"Eliane was a spirited child. Rivkah, she had so much joy," their father said.

Rivkah "gave joy to everybody," he said. "And David, he was so fun."

Yeshua was "always trying to make others happy," as was Yaakob, Sassoon said.

Lawmakers: Funding education for Texas veterans is too high

AUSTIN, Texas (AP)—They signed up to fight for their country, and the state of Texas promised to pay for their education.

For decades, veterans went to public universities and colleges under the Hazlewood Exemption, which kicks in after federal benefits under the G.I. Bill are exhausted. But the price tag has increased sevenfold since 2009, when legislators in Texas—which has the country's second-highest veteran population, 1.7 million—allowed the benefit to be passed on to veterans' chil-

dren under a legacy provision.

"Everybody's heart was in the right place when we added all the other beneficiaries," said Republican Sen. Kel Seliger, chair of the Senate's higher education committee. But, he added, "it just got too high of a price tag."

Now, amid rising legacy costs and concern that a federal lawsuit over residency could push the benefit's annual figure to \$2 billion, policymakers must carefully balance state politics and fiscal conservatism with

commitments made to veterans during World War II.

Of the 10 states with the most veterans, only Illinois and Texas waive all tuition and fees for veterans who meet program requirements, according to a Texas Legislative Budget Board report. And Texas is the only state of the 10 to offer full tuition and fee waivers to children, the report said, a decision made in 2009 in tandem with expanding the benefit to include spouses of veterans who were injured, missing or killed in action.

About 39,000 Texas residents used the benefit last fiscal year, at a cost of \$169 million, according to the Texas Legislative Budget Board. That's 576 percent more than before the legacy expansion, when only about 10,000 used the exemption at a cost of nearly \$25 million.

Most of the cost of the program falls to the higher education institutions, other than \$11.4 million from a new state fund that dispersed Hazlewood reimbursement money this fiscal year.

Asia

Lee Kuan Yew, founder of modern Singapore, dies at 91

SINGAPORE (AP)—Lee Kuan Yew, the founder of modern Singapore who was both feared for his authoritarian tactics and admired worldwide for turning the city-state into one of the world's richest nations while in power for 31 years, died Monday. He was 91.

Lee was admitted to Singapore General Hospital on Feb. 5 for severe pneumonia and was later put on life support.

The Prime Minister's Office said in a statement posted on its website that Lee "passed away peacefully" at the hospital at 3:18 a.m. Monday.

■■■ **SINGAPORE** (AP)—Singaporeans wept and world leaders paid tribute Monday as the Southeast Asian city-state mourned the death of its founding father Lee Kuan Yew.

The government announced that Lee, 91, "passed away peacefully" several hours before dawn at Singapore General Hospital. An increasingly frail Lee was hospitalized in early February with severe pneumonia.

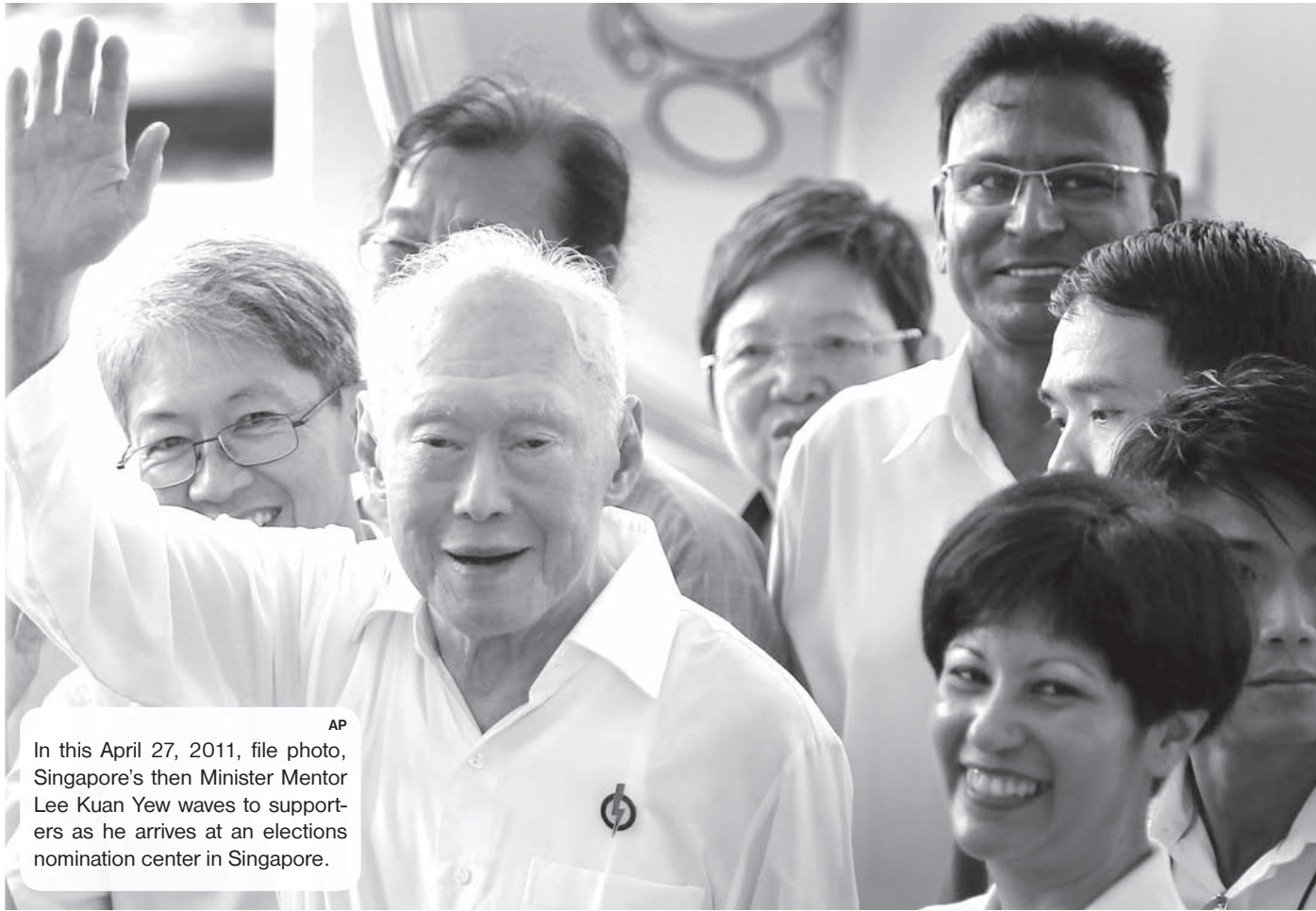
State television broke away from regular programming with a hagiographic tribute to Lee's life and achievements. In a live broadcast, one of its reporters called Lee's death the "awful and dreaded" news.

Lee commanded immense respect, and sometimes fear, from Singaporeans, who this year will celebrate the country's 50th anniversary of independence. He led multiracial Singapore with an iron grip for more than three decades until 1990, and is credited with transforming the resource poor island into a wealthy bustling financial hub with low crime and almost zero corruption.

His son, the current prime minister Lee Hsien Loong, struggled to hold back tears in a televised address to the nation.

Speaking in Malay, Mandarin and English, the prime minister said Lee built a nation and gave Singaporeans a proud national identity.

■■■ The country's first and longest-serving prime minister, Lee guided Singapore through a traumatic split with Malaysia in 1965 and led the transformation of what was then a sleepy port city into a global trade and finance center. Although he could have remained in office for much longer, he stepped aside and handed over leadership of the ruling party, and the country, to a younger generation in 1990. Still, he remained an influential behind-the-scenes figure for many more years until his health deteriorated.



AP
In this April 27, 2011, file photo, Singapore's then Minister Mentor Lee Kuan Yew waves to supporters as he arrives at an elections nomination center in Singapore.

S I D E B A R

Key dates in the life of ex-Singaporean leader Lee Kuan Yew

Key dates in the life of Lee Kuan Yew, the founding father of modern Singapore and the city-state's first and longest-serving prime minister.

■ Sept. 16, 1923: Lee is born in Singapore, then a British colony.

■ 1942-45: Education at Raffles College is interrupted by Japanese occupation of Singapore during World War II.

■ 1946: Goes to England and studies law at Cambridge University, where he was known as Harry, a name his grandfather called him.

■ 1947: Secretly marries Kwa Geok Choo, fellow student at Cambridge.

■ 1950: Returns to Singapore.

■ 1954: Helps form People's Action Party, becomes party's secretary-general.

■ 1955: Wins seat in legislative assembly, starts law firm Lee & Lee with his wife.

■ 1959: Lee becomes Singapore's first prime minister after People's Action Party wins decisively in general election. Britain grants Singapore self-governance in all matters except defense and foreign affairs.

■ 1963: Lee declares Singapore's full independence from Britain, joins with Malaya to form Federation of Malaysia.

■ 1965: Singapore splits from Malaysia to become independent.

■ 1968, 1976, 1980: Under

Lee, ruling party wins all seats in parliamentary elections.

■ 1990: After Singapore enjoys more than two decades of spectacular economic growth, Lee resigns as prime minister. He is appointed senior minister and continues to wield influence.

■ 2004: Son Lee Hsein Loong becomes Singapore's third prime minister.

■ 2011: Gives up Cabinet minister post and resigns from executive committee of the People's Action Party after it fared relatively poorly in parliamentary elections.

■ Feb. 5, 2015: Hospitalized with severe pneumonia.

■ March 23, 2015: Lee dies at Singapore General Hospital.

surveys of the most livable cities for expatriates.

He faced criticism, though, for using tough tactics to consolidate power. He jailed some political rivals without trial for decades and brought defamation lawsuits against journalists and opposition politicians, which had a chilling effect on dissent.

Lee insisted that strict limits on free speech and public protest were necessary to maintain stability in a multiethnic and multi-religious country that witnessed race riots in the 1960s. That stability, he added, was needed to enable growth and raise living standards in a country with few natural resources.

"I had to do some nasty things, locking fellows up without trial," Lee said in an inter-

view with The New York Times published in September 2010. "I'm not saying everything I did was right. But everything I did was for an honorable purpose."

Lee, whose People's Action Party has ruled Singapore since 1959, remained a powerful adviser with Cabinet minister status after stepping down as prime minister, and many Singaporeans, particularly older ones, viewed him as a wise, if strict, father figure.

Lee gave up his Cabinet minister post and resigned from the executive committee of the People's Action Party after 2011 parliamentary elections in which the ruling party won its lowest overall vote percentage since independence.

One of his sons, Lee Hsien Loong, is Singapore's current prime minister. He also is survived by another son, Lee Hsien Yang, and a daughter, neurologist Lee Wei Ling. His wife of more than 60 years, Kwa Geok Choo, died in October 2010.

Born Sept. 16, 1923, Lee grew up speaking English in a Singapore that was part of the British colonial empire, and was known as Harry during much of his early life. His university education was interrupted by the three-year Japanese occupation of the island in World War II, a time Lee said he learned how power could be wielded.

"The Japanese demanded total obedience, and got it from nearly all," he wrote in his memoirs. "My appreciation of governments, my understanding of power as the vehicle for revolutionary change, would not have been gained without this experience."

After completing his studies

at Singapore's Raffles College, Lee went to England to study law at Cambridge University. There, he married Kwa, a fellow student, in 1947. He returned to Singapore in 1950 and started the law firm Lee & Lee with his wife in 1955.

In 1954, Lee helped found the People's Action Party in alliance with communist trade unionists—whom he would later break with—and he became Singapore's first prime minister in 1959 when Britain granted it self-governance in all matters except defense and foreign affairs.

Singapore declared independence from Britain in 1963, and Lee, believing his island couldn't survive alone, brought it into the federation of neighboring states that became Malaysia. But the Malay leadership asked Singapore to leave after two years because of ideological differences. Lee wept on national television while announcing the breakup, which he later would call one of his biggest political regrets.

He then turned to governing his tiny island state, imposing strict policies that some saw as micromanaging the daily lives of Singaporeans. Lee promoted English and Mandarin while banning other Chinese dialects from public schools, radio and TV. He also enforced ethnic integration by controlling the makeup of public apartment buildings, where 80 percent of the population lives. The micromanaging continued even under his successor, Goh Chok Tong, who banned the sale of chewing gum because people would stick them on subway doors.

"I say without the slightest remorse, that we wouldn't be here, we would not have made economic progress, if we had not intervened on very personal matters—who your neighbor is, how you live, the noise you make, how you spit, or what language you use. We decide what is right. Never mind what the people think," Lee said in 1987.

Lee also cracked down on organized crime and imposed harsh penalties for minor infractions, a policy that has helped Singapore maintain one of the world's lowest violent crime rates.

Drug couriers face mandatory hanging, vandals are sometimes caned—such as American teenager Michael Fay in 1994 despite a plea for leniency from President Bill Clinton—and litterbugs must pay a hefty fine.

Lee stayed active in his later years, commenting on domestic and international affairs and representing Singapore on frequent trips abroad.

The government declared seven days of national mourning and ordered flags to fly at half-staff on state buildings.

World

Tourists flocking to Cuba 'before the Americans come'

HAVANA (AP)—Bookings to Cuba jumped 57 percent for one New York tour operator in the weeks after Washington said it would renew ties with Havana. In February, they were up 187 percent; and so far this month, nearly 250 percent.

The boom is just one sign that the rush is on to see Cuba now—before, as many predict, McDonald's claims a spot in Old Havana and Starbucks moves in on Cubita, the island's premium coffee brand.

The sense that detente will unleash an invasion of Yankee tourists and change the unique character of one of the world's last remaining bastions of communism is shared by many travelers flocking here.

"Cuba has a very authentic atmosphere which you see nowhere else in the world," Gay Ben Aharon of Israel said while walking through Revolution Square. "I wanted to see it before the American world ... but also the modern Western world comes here."

Outsiders may romanticize the "time-capsule" nation, but many on the island are ready for change.

Where foreigners see charming, historic architecture, bright 1950s-era American cars and vast stretches of white-sand beaches, locals see decaying buildings in need of repair, new vehicles priced beyond their reach and a lack of



AP
In this March 8, 2015 photo, a tourist gets out of a classic American car in Havana, Cuba. The Washington and Havana December announcement that they would move toward a historic rapprochement appears to have sparked an influx of tourism.

economic opportunity.

For many Cubans living in dilapidated, multigenerational tenements, change could be good. It may expand access to the Internet and the outside world, creating engagement that could bring brighter economic days and, practically speaking, make it easier to fix a leaky roof.

"We're very excited," said Yadiel Carmenate, a 26-year-old English major at the University

of Matanzas who moonlights as a tour guide.

It's unlikely Cuba will see major changes overnight. Talks to take the first steps toward normalized relations are just beginning and there is stiff opposition in the U.S. Congress to lifting the 53-year-old embargo that bars most trade with and travel to the island.

Still, the December announcement appears to have sparked an influx of tourism.

InsightCuba, the tour operator based in New Rochelle, New York, is adding excursions as its monthly bookings explode compared with early 2014.

"It's a huge surge," company president Tom Popper said. "Word's gotten out and people are communicating that they want to go before Cuba changes."

Already this year, more foreigners are roaming the cobblestoned streets of Old Havana.

Cuba saw a 16 percent increase in visitors in January compared with a year earlier, a total of about 371,000.

Tourism, a \$2.6 billion-plus industry, is one of the main engines that has kept Cuba's economy sputtering along. Last year,

the country welcomed 3 million visitors, a record.

About 600,000 U.S. travelers are estimated to visit Cuba each year, most of them Cuban-Americans visiting family but also tens of thousands coming on approved cultural, religious and educational exchanges. An untold number of others have, for years, skirted travel restrictions by journeying through third countries such as the Bahamas or Mexico.

Cuban officials estimate that 1.5 million Americans would travel here annually if all restrictions were removed, supplanting Canada as the No. 1 source of tourism and potentially adding some \$2 billion a year to state coffers.

However, the island is hardly ready for a Yankee invasion. Already it strains to accommodate travelers during the December-April high season.

UN envoy: Yemen is being pushed 'to the edge of civil war'

UNITED NATIONS (AP)—The U.N. special envoy for Yemen warned an emergency meeting of the U.N. Security Council on Sunday that events appear to be leading the Arab country "to the edge of civil war" and urged all parties to step back from the brink and resolve the conflict peacefully.

Jamal Benomar stressed repeatedly in a video briefing from Qatar that "peaceful dialogue is the only option we have."

That view was echoed by the Security Council in a presidential statement which reaffirmed

the readiness of the U.N.'s most powerful body to take "further measures" against any party impeding the road to peace in Yemen. That could mean new sanctions, or possibly other actions.

Lithuania's U.N. Ambassador Raimonda Murmokaite said after the closed consultations that all the council members supported a return to negotiations, but she doesn't foresee new sanctions—"not at this stage."

Benomar said "it would be an illusion" to think that Houthi Shiite rebels—who control

the capital Sanaa, much of the north, and are moving further south backed by some members of Yemen's armed forces—could succeed in taking control of the entire country. On Sunday, the Houthis seized Taiz, Yemen's third-largest city.

"It would be equally false," Benomar said, to think that embattled President Abed-Rabbo Mansour Hadi, who fled earlier this month to the southern city of Aden—the country's economic hub—could assemble sufficient forces "to liberate the country from the Houthis."

He warned that any party that pushes the country in either direction "would be inviting a protracted conflict in the vein of an Iraq, Syria, Libya combined scenario."

Yemen's turmoil and political crisis has deepened since the Houthis seized Sanaa in September and put Hadi under house arrest and eventually dissolved the country's parliament. The country's al-Qaida branch, considered by the United States the terror network's most dangerous offshoot, has stepped up attacks against the Shiite rebels.

US trains Iraqi forces as battle for Tikrit continues

TAJI, Iraq (AP)—As the U.S. mission to Iraq expands, so do its efforts to arm and train the country's security forces to combat the Islamic State group, with large-scale operations continuing to recapture territory from the Sunni militants.

Hundreds of American advisers are working at the Camp Taji military base just north of Baghdad to train Iraqi forces on issues like weaponry and better coordination and integration of ground action with coalition airstrikes.

The goal, U.S. military of-

ficials say, is to teach the different divisions of the Iraqi military how to harmonize the operations of its various fighting units.

"This Iraqi commander ... has a company worth of infantry soldiers, he's got some armor assets from the Iraqi army, he's got two helicopters that are flying ... and then he's got engineers and (explosive ordinance disposal)," said Maj. Russell Wagner, one of the U.S. officers conducting training.

They "are all out here working in unison in order to get

him through this obstacle and into the town that lies beyond," Wagner said.

In November, President Barack Obama authorized the deployment of up to 1,500 more American troops to bolster Iraqi forces, which could more than double the total of U.S. forces to 3,100. The boost in advisers and trainers complements the air campaign launched by the U.S. in August 2014.

The Iraqi military has struggled to recover from its collapse in June when the Islamic State group captured country's

second-largest city, Mosul, and swept over much of northern Iraq. In the face of the advance, commanders disappeared. Pleas for more ammunition went unanswered. In some cases, soldiers stripped off their uniforms and ran.

Twelve U.S. advisory teams had been operating in Iraq since August, stationed in joint operations centers in Baghdad and Irbil, as well as in some of the outer provinces, including volatile Anbar province, which has been under partial control of the militant group since early 2014.

Vote blunts rise of France's far-right National Front

PARIS (AP)—France's governing Socialists never expected to do well in Sunday's first-round local elections, and their strategy worked just as planned: Their conservative rivals took first place.

Before the elections for 2,000 local councils, the Socialists urged people to vote, hoping that turnout would blunt the rise of Marine Le Pen's far right National Front, even if it meant Nicolas Sarkozy's conservative UMP would be the victor.

Initial projections from polling agencies gave the UMP party 31 percent of the vote compared with 24.5 percent for the National Front and 19.7 percent for the Socialists and their allies. Turnout was 51 percent, compared with about 45 percent in similar elections in 2011.

With little air of a man in third place, Prime Minister Manuel Valls was the first to praise the far right party's defeat.

"This evening, the extreme right, even it is too high, is not at the forefront of French politics," Valls said. "When we mobilize the French, it works."

Le Pen was nowhere on the ballots themselves, but her National Front is trying to build a

grassroots army of local officials to buttress her presidential ambitions in 2017.

France's council elections are in two rounds, so victory Sunday determines which candidates can contest a second vote March 29.

The Socialists, which currently control the majority of the councils, are deeply unpopular after the government's failure to turn around France's economy. Both they and the UMP are torn by infighting, leaving the National Front something of an open field for the first round.

But both the Socialists and UMP, normally rivals, have issued dire warnings about France's future under a resurgent National Front, which is opposed to immigration, the perceived "Islamization" of France, and the European Union. Le Pen has tapped disillusionment with a stagnant economy and transformed the party from a pariah under her father, party co-founder Jean-Marie Le Pen, into one of France's most popular political forces.

Jockeying ahead of the second round started moments after the first-round results came in.

Valls essentially called for voters to choose anyone run-

Focus

Activists reflect on Syria's spiral from protests to horror

By ZEINA KARAM
ASSOCIATED PRESS

BEIRUT (AP)—Abed Hakawati spends his days in a devastated, rebel-held neighborhood of Aleppo, writing graffiti on the walls to remind residents and rebels alike of the original goals of the uprising that erupted four years ago: “Freedom, dignity and social equality.”

The 37-year-old, once an actor in the theater, is now a fugitive, on the run both from President Bashar Assad’s forces and Islamic State group militants who have taken advantage of the civil war to take over much of northern and eastern Syria.

Hakawati is among the secular activists with a dream of a democratic Syria who were the backbone of the peaceful protest movement that erupted in March 2011 against Assad’s autocratic rule. Their dream didn’t just fail, it exploded. They watched it perverted in ways that reached new depths of horror year after year, from barrel bombs smashing historic cities to Islamic radicals beheading and burning opponents.

Four years later, many Syrians believe the conflict has become a choice between rule by Assad and rule by Islamic radicals, and many, the activists admit, prefer the former. Hopes of democracy seem distant in a wrecked nation where more

than 220,000 people have been killed, countless others maimed and millions dispersed in the worst humanitarian crisis of the 21st century. The conflict has bred extremism that has touched countries across the globe and instilled chaos that may redraw the map of the Middle East.

Those original activists lucky enough to have survived or escaped abroad now struggle to come to terms with what went wrong. Many say the chaos is exactly what Assad wanted to preserve his rule.

“Quite simply, all the moderate voices that have called for a civil, democratic state have been either silenced or radicalized,” said Hakawati. “This was Bashar Assad’s plan, and it worked.”

Inspired by the Arab Spring uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt, Syria’s revolt erupted in March 2011, when security forces arrested a group of teenagers who scrawled anti-Assad graffiti on a wall in the southern city of Daraa. A small protest took place in Damascus’ old city on March 15 calling for reforms, considered by many the start of the uprising. Three days later, security forces opened fire on a protest in Daraa, killing four people, the first deaths of the revolt.

Protests grew and spread in towns and cities across provinces, met by batons and bullets. Protests were often joyous. In the central city of Homs—one of the worst hit by the crackdown—exultant crowds of protesters danced arm in arm and singing to the beat of a drum

“Yalla Irhal, ya Bashar!”—a simple yet powerful lyric translating to “Come on, Bashar, leave.”

Raed Fares remembers the day the uprising reached his hometown of Kafranbel in northwestern Syria, a month after the Daraa protests. About 60 protesters came out of the Grand Mosque and walked to the main square, shouting: “God, Syria, Freedom!” They were met with about 150 security agents who took down their names and sent them home. A few days later, the police raided homes and arrested dozens of young men.

Protests swelled from a few dozen to thousands.

Across opposition areas, the army moved in, terrorized protesters and closed down mosques, and residents began to take up arms to defend themselves, joined by defectors from the military.

Assad’s security forces deployed tanks, snipers and eventually warplanes and helicopter-dropped barrel bombs. Activists, bloggers and opposition figures went underground to avoid arrest. Ghayyath Mattar, a rights activist, was killed under torture by security forces. Mazen Darwish, a Syrian writer and leading activist, was imprisoned. Yassin Al-Haj Saleh, a secular revolutionary who spent 16 years in political imprisonment, fled to Turkey after living underground for months.

In Kafranbel, Fares and a group of friends began drawing witty, colorful protest signs skewering the Assad regime and

satirizing the war. The posters were an instant hit on social media and shot Kafranbel to fame.

But as moderates were suppressed, radicals moved into the void. Fares remembers his first encounters with them. The opposition succeeded in driving government forces out of Kafranbel in August 2012, a moment of victory. But as they tried to organize a local administration, “the beards entered the fray,” he said, referring to Islamic militants. Within months, the euphoria was clouded by worries over the extremists taking over.

In opposition-held areas around the country, mini-wars erupted between moderates and extremists, first the al-Qaida-linked Nusra Front, then the Islamic State group, distracting from the fight against Assad.

Fares, 42, refused to fight, insisting the word was stronger than the gun. He runs a media center and “Radio Fresh,” a station funded by American NGOs described as the only opposition station operating from inside Syria. In January 2014, Islamic State militants tried to assassinate him, spraying his car with 40 bullets. He was hospitalized for three months. In December, he was detained and beaten by Nusra Front for three days.

Now extremists control about half of Syria. The Islamic State group, which also holds about a third of Iraq, is imposing its brutal rule in the large swath it controls, and the Nusra Front’s rule over its own areas is hardly better. In that light, some Syrians see Assad as the lesser of

two evils, with his grip bringing a degree of calm in Damascus and other main cities.

Activist Kassem Eid admits with regret that the millions of displaced, the devastation of cities, the suffering and the hunger have all become sideline issues for many in the face of the radicals. “That’s absolutely not fair. They’re looking at the side effects and forgetting about the cancer. The cancer is the Assad regime,” he said in an interview by phone from the United States.

Eid, who went by the activist alias of Qusai Zakarya, fled Syria in early 2014. He had survived the deadly August 2013 chemical weapons in the Ghouta region in Damascus, and a two year government siege of his hometown of Moaddamiyeh where people died because of lack of food and medicine. Since arriving in the U.S. a year ago, he has been giving presentations at universities and meeting with American politicians to tell them about his experience in Syria.

As the death toll mounts, some young activists acknowledge some naiveté in their decision to challenge one of the region’s most brutal police states, but defend the right to take up arms in self-defense.

They acknowledge that lots of mistakes were made from the beginning, including taking money from outside sources, which introduced outside agendas. They argue that it was Assad’s brutal suppression and the United States and the West’s failures to support moderates that created the space for jihadis

to move in.

Fares says moderates like him far outnumber extremists but have been put down by both the government and the militants.

He believes Syria’s future for the next 20 years is “black.”

But he is convinced moderates will prevail in the end. “Everything else has been tested and tried. It failed.”

Eid agrees. “I know four years seems like a long time, but four years in the scale of history is nothing,” he said of the conflict so far. “This is the will of history. Dictators always fall. People always win, sooner or later.”

Hakawati remembers the carnival-like atmosphere of the early protests with a smile, but sadness washes over as he remembers friends who were gunned down.

“The regime infiltrated every space for freedom and happiness and planted an ugly memory in it,” he said.

Still, he refuses to give up.

He was arrested twice and wounded five times in the past four years, fled to Turkey but returned to Aleppo five months ago and rented an apartment in the neighborhood of Bustan al-Qasr. There is no water or electricity and “death visits 24 hours a day.”

But he works with other media activists and trains photographers. Sometimes, he draws the names of dead friends on the walls, and other graffiti reminders.

“It was a revolution for dignity,” he wrote on a recent day.

AP
In this Wednesday, Nov. 19, 2014 file photo, Kurdish People’s Protection Units (YPG) soldiers walk near the town entrance circle heading to their strongholds in Kobani, Syria.

Overdrive

By JEAN JENNINGS
JEANKNOWSCARS.COM

You can divide the vast number of new pickup truck buyers between two nameplates—Ford F-150 and Chevrolet Silverado. My mom had two Chevys; I had a Ford. And we were definitely not alone. These pickup trucks' sales are so huge, they are the No. 1 and No. 2 best-selling vehicles in America. Not first and second among trucks, mind you, but among all vehicles. Oh, by the way, Chrysler's Ram pickup is in third place. I had two of those, too.

For the past 33 years, Americans have loved Ford the best, and despite 2014 being a down year for the F-150, Ford still sold just shy of 754,000 F-150s—an astonishing 200,000 more than Chevy's new Silverado.

Lining up the two rivals, I see a beautifully refined 2015 Silverado, almost carlike in its appointments and technologies. I see a truck that appeals to people who love and/or need trucks, one that women feel comfortable in.

Looking at the 2015 F-150, especially in the XLT 4x4 Supercab trim as shown here, I see a manly brawler chiseled from a piece of cold, hard steel. That's kind of funny, considering the body of the new F-150 is actually made of aluminum to save weight. This was a controversial move that had Ford's uber-loyal contractor fans questioning how tough it would be.

The front end looks like a Mack truck looming in your rearview. The bumpers, the side mirrors, the instrument panel and dash, and even the logos look like they were carved with a hammer and chisel, not penned. Tough stuff.

There are five different models of the F-150—XL, XLT, Lariat, King Ranch and Platinum—with base prices ranging from \$26,615 to \$52,155. Oh, but you are far, far from finished pricing your F-150.

Ford's attractive configurator begins with the base XL, priced at \$26,615 (including destination charge), and moves up from there. There is a choice of five F-150 models, three different cab configurations, three different bed sizes, and four different engines.

As for the driving experience: Without a running board and a grab handle inside on the A-pillar, I couldn't have gotten in. Driving down the road, I opened the lid of the gargantuan console box and couldn't get around the lid to get what I'd stowed. It's just huge and in the way.

The radio controls surround the center screen. The non-touch control setup was confusing after spending the past several years trying to master MyFord Touch. (Upgrade to the Lariat trim level to get that setup.) It took a while to figure out that there was no control-

The 2015 Ford F-150 is one tough truck



The 2015 Ford F-150. MCT

NUTS & BOLTS

2015 Ford F-150 XLT Supercab 4x4

- Price Range: \$38,200-\$44,850 (includes destination charge)
- Engine: Turbocharged 2.7-liter V-6, 325 horsepower
- EPA Fuel Economy: 18 mpg city/23 mpg highway
- Fun-O-Meter: 5

ler, just a block of push buttons: left, right, up and down arrows surrounding an OK button. Just far enough away to make you take your eyes off the road. The good news is that all of the buttons and knobs are big enough for big contractor fingers.

Driving the Ford F-150 reinforces the notion that you're no weekend rodeo clown. First, you feel cool just for being able to get in it. Then the ride is, shall we say, a tad manly. The 2.7 EcoBoost felt good leaving the driveway, but the suspension jounce was noticeable. The ride turned out to be pretty decent, although you have to pay attention.

The tailgate is also a bit of a struggle, now that I've gotten used to one-touch hydraulics in so many other vehicles. You can't one-hand it; it'll take both hands and a little forearm. It does have a power lock of the type first seen in Toyotas, along with a rearview camera aimed directly at the trailer hitch. Today's rearview cameras are much more sophisticated and

can give you a really helpful view. The Supercab is just big enough to really make it necessary; you'll be parking by Braille without it.

Make no mistake: This is no throwback to the trucks of my youth. The engine is smooth

and quiet. The brakes are four-wheel discs with ABS. The 4x4 is electric shift on the fly. There's hill-start assist, power rack and pinion steering, trailer sway control, and both front-seat-mounted side airbags and canopy side curtain airbags.

But the bottom line is, you really have to want a huge truck to come to grips with the Ford F-150. I love trucks, and I wanted to love this one. It's made of aluminum, and it's strong and lightweight. But there is a bigness about it that I didn't expect.

When you see that giant grille (almost comical in its chiseled brutality), you are seeing exactly what I was feeling. There's a lot to like in the Ford F-150, especially if you want your truck with a feeling of toughness that is off the macho scale.

UNDER THE HOOD

Mileage aside, aged timing belt warrants replacement

By BRAD BERGHOLDT
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

Q: I have a 2007 Acura MDX. It was purchased new, is serviced regularly and is never abused. It now has 53,000 miles on it. Everything I'm reading states the timing belt should be replaced at 105,000 miles (60,000 for severe usage). Age is not mentioned. The dealer is telling me it should be replaced because the car is 8 years old. It's a lot of money if it's not necessary. Your opinion please.—Anonymous

A: This question comes up a lot and everyone has a differing opinion. Some carmakers do specify a time interval along with the mileage, and you'd be coming up close with most of them. My concern is you have a magnificent engine that could incur significant and expensive damage if the timing belt was to break. This is known as an interference engine, where the valves will collide with the pistons if the crankshaft and

camshaft lose synchronization due to belt breakage. In order to deliver high performance, many modern engines are designed this way.

It's logical that most timing belt wear occurs due to use, but environmental conditions such as airborne ozone and oil contamination could be taking their toll as well. Methodically inspecting the belt's inner cogs for cracks or deterioration makes sense, but isn't easy to do on many engines without some disassembly. If it were my vehicle, I'd renew the timing belt at 60,000 miles, along with the water pump and belt tensioner. These additional parts are recommended as they could derail or destroy the belt if one of them fails.

Q: How many miles should a catalytic converter and two sensors last? I have a four-cylinder Honda Accord with 161,000 miles. What's best: a new or replacement converter?—Bob Seashore

A: In a perfect world these parts would last the life of the

vehicle. Catalytic converters can gradually lose efficiency due to contamination and excessive heat. Oxygen sensors can also become biased or sleepy, again from contamination, and occasionally suffer from internal heater failure. Phosphorus and zinc deposits due to oil usage and silicone contamination as a result of coolant leakage—from head gasket leakage, a cracked cylinder head or the wrong engine sealants, can slowly poison both the cat and oxygen sensors. Newer motor oils and some coolants have greatly reduced levels of these substances. A mode six scan tool reading (challenging to interpret) can indicate how close or far these parts are from reaching the failure threshold.

Major failure of a catalytic converter can occur due to engine misfiring, an excessively rich air-fuel mixture, impact damage and possibly a cold quench from a really deep puddle. The normally high temperature within the catalyst

can soar with unburned air and fuel passing through, resulting in melting and breakage of the honeycomb substrate. Besides spoiling emissions treatment, this, along with impact or quench damage can cause a clogging effect, dramatically reducing engine performance. Greater heat caused by a rich air-fuel mixture fuses pores in the converter's active surface, reducing oxygen storage capacity. Assuming upstream and downstream oxygen sensors are functioning correctly, the dreaded P0420 diagnostic trouble code usually makes the right call that the cat has seen better life. If one plans to keep a car for the long term, I'd opt for the greater durability, better performance and longer warranty of an OEM cat instead of a less expensive aftermarket replacement.

Brad Bergholdt is an automotive technology instructor at Evergreen Valley College in San Jose, Calif. Readers may send him email at under-the-hood(at)earthlink.net; he cannot make personal replies.

Life & Style

Italy shows off restored Pompeii villa as EU deadline looms

POMPEII, Italy (AP)—Italy unveiled the restored crown jewel of the ancient city of Pompeii on Friday, showing off a rare success story as it races to shore up the site marred by such mismanagement and neglect that it risked losing EU funding and its UNESCO World Heritage site listing.

Culture Minister Dario Franceschini cut the ribbon to open the restored Villa of Mysteries, a spectacular estate on the outskirts of Pompeii's city center that features some of the best-preserved frescoes of the site.

Franceschini said that while problems still remain at Pompeii, Italy was on schedule to meet a European Union deadline to spend 105 million euros (\$111 million) in EU funds by the end of the year for maintenance and restoration projects.

While only three projects have been completed, 13 are underway and some 65 million euros has been awarded in contracts, officials said. In addition, 85 people have been hired to work on the site and visitor numbers last year were 200,000 more than in 2013.

"We know well that the world looks with great attention at everything that happens at Pompeii," Franceschini said



A view of the frescoes of the newly restored Villa of Mysteries on the occasion of its presentation to journalists in the ancient site of Pompeii, Italy, Friday, March 20, 2015. AP

as he stood before a fresco of Dionysius and Aphrodite in the villa's main salon. "Today, Italy is proud to say to the world that

we have turned a page."

Pompeii, a busy commercial city overlooking the Mediterranean, was destroyed in A.D.

79 by an eruption of Mount Vesuvius that killed thousands of people and buried the city in 20 feet (six meters) of volcanic ash. But the ash also helped preserve Pompeii's treasures, providing precious information about life in the ancient world.

The first excavations began in the 18th century, but even today only two-thirds of the site's 60 hectares (150 acres) have been uncovered.

In recent years, Pompeii has been bedeviled by neglect and mismanagement characteristic of Italy's underdeveloped south, as well as brushes with

the corruption that has infected some other important public works in Italy, including its Expo 2015 World's Fair in Milan and the Moses water barrier project in Venice.

Hit by heavy rains, some of Pompeii's walls have literally crumbled.

The 2010 collapse of the Villa of Gladiators, and further collapses at Pompeii the following year, caused such international alarm that the EU stepped forward with funding and Italy created a mini-administration to govern the restoration project and make sure it wasn't infil-

trated by the mafia.

Among other things, the EU project called for the site to be shored up and for a drainage system to be built. But Italy's chronic bureaucratic delays prevented progress and the EU made clear it that Italy would lose the money if it didn't use it by Dec. 31.

At the same time, UNESCO threatened to take Pompeii off its World Heritage list—a coveted designation that inspires many of the site's more than 2 million visitors each year. A UNESCO inspection in November, however, acknowledged that progress had been made.

Franceschini quoted from the UNESCO report, which said any question about Pompeii's place on the list had been "overcome" and that there had been a "profound change in the behavior" of its administration.

Franceschini said Italy was in negotiations with private firms to fund other restoration projects for Pompeii, evidence that private donors are increasingly having an important footprint in caring for Italy's most iconic treasures, which have earned it 50 UNESCO World Heritage listings, more than any other country.

Shoemaker Tod's is footing the 25 million-euro bill to restore the Colosseum, jeweler Bulgari is cleaning up Rome's Spanish Steps and the government last year passed an initiative to give culture restoration donors a 65 percent tax credit.

"Private resources can be integrated with public ones, but cannot replace them," Franceschini said. "The vastness of our patrimony will always require a huge commitment of public resources."

Rare Tennessee Williams story published for first time

NEW YORK (AP)—As she takes in the despair of her in-laws' one-room apartment in "A Streetcar Named Desire," Blanche Dubois exclaims: "Only Poe! Only Mr. Edgar Allan Poe could do it justice!"

Years earlier, Tennessee Williams channeled Poe for an entire story.

Williams' "The Eye That Saw Death," appearing in the spring issue of The Strand Magazine, is a feverish, 4,800-word horror tale clearly inspired by the patron of the genre. Recently unearthed by Strand managing editor Andrew F. Gulli, "The Eye That Saw Death" is narrated by an unnamed man who has suffered from a seemingly incurable disease that has left him nearly blind. At age 30, he receives an eye transplant that restores his sight but leaves him with ghoul-like side effects. The narrator is afflicted with visions that begin as a "chaotic blur," then become more focused and traumatizing, whether "huge, black, bulging eyes" or "terrible, tusk-like teeth."

The new eye, it turns out, belonged to a convicted killer. The narrator begs to have the surgery reversed.

"It is true that the pleasures of the blind are few and frugal," Williams writes. "They

live apart from the world and participate little in its affairs. But I do not regret that choice I made the day I fell, raving mad with horror, to the floor of the oculist's office. Oh, never! Far, far better to be blind than to see with the eye that saw death!"

Gulli, who has previously published little-known works by Graham Greene and John Steinbeck among others, found "The Eye That Saw Death" at one of the country's leading literary archives, the Harry Ransom Center at the University of Texas at Austin. Williams scholar George Crandell says the undated work is a "pretty good story" and surprisingly polished for a piece never published before. Crandell is especially impressed because he thinks Williams was likely in high school when he completed it.

"The story has a similar feel to 'The Vengeance of Nitocris,' kind of a horror story that was published in Weird Tales in 1928 (when Williams was 16)," says Crandell, the associate dean of Auburn University's graduate school and a member of the editorial board of the literary journal the Tennessee Williams Annual Review.

"The Eye That Saw Death" has a fable-like quality even as its plot recalls Poe's "The Tell-

Tale Heart." It reads like an inversion of Greek mythology, in which the blind are not prophets or wise men, but those who truly will not see—or like an allegory for creative expression, when the artist is almost literally tortured by his vision.

Williams had good reason to be preoccupied with eyesight. He had poor vision in his left eye and would undergo four cataract operations, one of which he describes in "Memoirs," published in 1975. In a humorous but unsettling scenario that his early short story seemed to anticipate, Williams remembers agreeing to a procedure for which the doctor waived his fee in return for Williams allowing the operation to be the basis of a lecture to observing student ophthalmologists.

"The patient is now in position, apply the straps," Williams remembers, roughly, the doctor saying.

"Tighter, tighter, he has a history of vomiting during the surgery. Eyelids secured against blinking, pupil anesthetized now. The needle is now about to penetrate the iris. It is now into the iris. It has now penetrated the lens. Oh, oh, vomiting, nurse, choking, tube in esophagus. My God, what a patient. I mean very good, of course, but an unusual case."

For director, landing Pacino was something to sing about

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif. (AP)—"Danny Collins" casts Al Pacino as a veteran pop star who still fills arenas, has a gaggle of granny-aged groupies and a signature song with a call-and-response element that smacks of "Sweet Caroline."

But Danny Collins is not Neil Diamond.

"I've got a kind of equal-dosage mix of Neil Diamond, Rod Stewart, a lot of Tom Jones and a little Barry Manilow—those seem to be the four



Fogelman

that people ask about the most," said writer-director Dan Fogelman, whose big-screen comedy opens this weekend.

"Collins" actually was inspired by something that happened to another musician. Some 45 years ago, English folk singer-songwriter Steve Tilston did a magazine interview acknowledging a fear that wealth

and fame may negatively affect his songwriting. That statement inspired John Lennon to dash off a letter to Tilston in 1971.

"Being rich doesn't change your experience in the way you think," Lennon wrote.

Tilston didn't even learn about the letter until 2005, nearly 25 years after Lennon's death, when a collector reached out to confirm authenticity. A 2010 story on Tilston caught Fogelman's attention, but,

excepting the part about the Lennon letter—a key plot element of the film—"Danny Collins" isn't Tilston's story either.

Tilston stayed true to his acoustic-folk roots and, as per Fogelman, has enjoyed happy and productive personal and professional lives. Collins sold his soul for stardom, and just may reclaim it in the most un-

expected places: the embittered grown son he never knew (Bobby Cannavale) and a harried hotel manager (Annette Bening) who is unimpressed by Collins' star facade, but sees a promise for that man buried underneath it.

Once the 39-year-old Fogelman (a co-writer on Pixar's "Cars" 'toons) got the rights to Tilston's story, he crafted the "Collins" script specifically for Pacino, whom the director idolized growing up in New Jersey. That was a big risk, given Fogelman had no relationship with the Oscar-winning actor.

"When Al signed on to this movie, I was a 34-year-old guy who had never directed a movie before, who was best known for writing cartoon movies about talking cars," Fogelman said. "Honestly, him reading the script alone is a career highlight. And then him doing the movie is a career highlight. So, I'm kind of good."

'Lincoln Speaks' exhibit shows words' transformative power

NEW YORK (AP)—Pages of handwritten speeches and terse military communiqués jotted by Abraham Lincoln make up a major portion of an illuminating exhibit titled, “Lincoln Speaks: Words that Transformed a Nation.”

But the show at New York’s Morgan Library, which overlaps the 150th anniversary of end of the U.S. Civil War and of Lincoln’s assassination, also reveals him speaking in a personal voice that adds a touching dimension to the display.

Anyone who has pondered the mystery of how a young man from the backwoods with virtually no classroom schooling developed such an extraordinary command of language will be moved to see the small, leather-bound English grammar book he studied. This is not just an artifact of self-education, though; it represents, in effect, a love note. On the title page, Lincoln wrote that he was making his treasured book a gift to his first sweetheart, Ann Rutledge.

In a letter he wrote from the White House to a young woman about the death of her father in the war, he notes: “In this sad world of ours, sorrow comes to all; and, to the young, it comes with bitterest agony, because it takes them unawares. The older have learned to ever expect it.” Lincoln, who

had lost his mother when he was a boy, was then grieving the recent death of his beloved son Willie.

Here, his eloquence is fatherly, comforting. Other writing in the exhibit, such as that in a decoratively printed and signed copy of the Emancipation Proclamation, employs precise, dry legal language. The 1863 proclamation declared all slaves free in rebel states not controlled by the union.

This shows his special capacity to move “from role to role” as a writer, said Sandra Trenholm of the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, who with the Morgan Library’s Declan Keily curated “Lincoln Speaks.” The exhibit at the midtown Manhattan museum runs through June 7.

Those unfamiliar with Lincoln the poet will find examples here—he wrote verses occasionally from his teenage to his White House years. No one calls them great literature, but his poems illustrate both his humor and his melancholy.

The exhibit is full of surprises.

We see the formal “respite of execution” request in 1862 from a man convicted of slave-trading, a capital offense. Lincoln, otherwise known for his compassion and his pardons, refused the man’s bid for clemency.

After Lincoln’s death, someone retrieved his quill pen, used to write so many of his words, from his desk at the White House. It, too, is on display here.



This Sunday, Feb. 5, 1865 photo made available by the Library of Congress shows President Abraham Lincoln in Washington. This image is last photo in the president’s last photo session during his life.

‘Insurgent’ seizes top spot; ‘The Gunman’ misfires

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Sean Penn’s “The Gunman” was no match for the rebel kids of “Insurgent.”

The second installment in the “Divergent” series easily topped the box office with \$54 million from 3,875 theaters, according Rentrak estimates Sunday. Penn’s geopolitical thriller stumbled with only \$5 million.

While the second films in both the “Hunger Games” and the “Twilight” series boasted opening weekend gains over the first, “Insurgent’s” opening nearly matches that of its predecessor, “Divergent,” which debuted to \$54.6 million just last year.

Many predicted a bit of growth for this second film, which sees the return of stars Shailene Woodley, Theo James, and Kate Winslet to author Veronica Roth’s dystopian world. But, both distributor Lionsgate and box office analysts see the consistency as a good thing.

“We’re extremely pleased with the outcome,” said Lionsgate’s President of Domestic Distribution Richie Fay.

“I think this is exactly where we

1. **“Insurgent,”** \$54 million (\$47 million international).
2. **“Cinderella,”** \$34.5 million (\$41.1 million international).
3. **“Run All Night,”** \$5.1 million (\$5 million international).
4. **“The Gunman,”** \$5 million (\$900,000 international).
5. **“Kingsman: The Secret Service,”** \$4.6 million (\$8.5 million international).
6. **“Do You Believe?”** \$4 million.
7. **“The Second Best Exotic Marigold Hotel,”** \$3.5 million (\$3.2 million international).
8. **“Focus,”** \$3.3 million (\$7.9 million international).
9. **“Chappie,”** \$2.7 million (\$5.1 million international).
10. **“The SpongeBob Movie: Sponge Out of Water,”** \$2.4 million (\$3.2 million international).

Kerry Washington, Roland Emmerich among GLAAD honorees

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif. (AP)—Actress Kerry Washington, director Roland Emmerich, the film “The Imitation Game” and television shows “Transparent” and “How to Get Away With Murder” have received stamps of approval from GLAAD.

GLAAD is a U.S.-based group that promotes lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender presence in the media, and celebrated its honorees at a ceremony here Saturday night.

GLADD president and CEO Sarah Kate Ellis said “Scandal” star Washing-

ton was chosen by the group because, “She’s done quite a bit for the LGBT community and she’s a phenomenal spokeswoman for us. And she’s got our back. And she always has.”

In Washington’s acceptance speech, the actress reminded, “In 1997, when Ellen (DeGeneres) made her famous declaration, it took place in an America where the Defense of Marriage Act had just passed months earlier, and civil unions were not legal in any state. But also remember that just 30 years before that, the Supreme Court was deciding

that the ban against interracial marriage was unconstitutional.

“Up until then, heterosexual people of different races couldn’t marry who they wanted to marry either. So, when black people today say that they don’t believe in gay marriage ... the first thing that I say is, ‘Please don’t let anybody try to get you to vote against your own best interest by feeding you messages of hate.’ And then I say, ‘People use to say things about that about you and your love.’”

The German Emmerich is perhaps best known for producing and directing

the 1996 blockbuster “Independence Day,” as well as the 1998 remake of “Godzilla” and 2004’s “The Day After Tomorrow.” Now openly gay, Emmerich said he long kept his homosexuality private because he didn’t want to be limited to making only films with gay stories, as had happened with other directors in Germany.

Emmerich’s gay-themed historical drama “Stonewall” will be released later this year. And Emmerich said “Independence Day 2,” due next year, will feature an openly gay character.

Snoop Dogg says he’s developing HBO series

AUSTIN, Texas (AP)—Snoop Dogg has cleaned up his image from gangster rapper to multi-format entertainer, but he’s looking to the past in a new series he’s developing for HBO.

Snoop announced Friday—when he was giving the keynote address at South by Southwest—that he’s working with Allen Hughes on the show about 1980s Los Angeles.

Snoop, a former gangster rapper, was born in Long Beach, California. Hughes’ credits include “Dead Presidents,” “Menace II Society” and “The Book of Eli.”

“HBO is the number one network in the world as far as developing and having these types of shows come to life,” he said. “This is a dream come true to be able to tell a story that’s going to be told the right way on the right network.”

In a wide-ranging interview Friday with his manager Ted Chung in Austin, Texas, 43-year-old Snoop discussed topics from getting high with Willie Nelson to meeting Dr. Dre.

FRIED CHICKEN

The chicken was fried, but Snoop and Willie Nelson were baked.

Snoop and Nelson collaborated on the song “My Medicine” and he said “it was love at first sight.”

“We went in the green room, had a conversation and from there the conversation sparked up the idea of—yeah sparked up the idea of—me and Willie wanting to collaborate,” he said as the audience at the Austin Convention Center burst into laughter.

Snoop went to Amsterdam, where Nelson was on tour, and worked on the track. After smoking so much marijuana, they decided to get food.

“They give us the bucket of chicken, we open it up, boom, and me and Willie stuck our hands in at the same time and we grabbed the same piece of chicken,” he said, as the audience laughed again. “And I look at Willie, I was like, ‘That’s you dog, my bad.’”

“That was one of the greatest moments in my life.”

WHO NEEDS A GRAMMY?

Though Snoop has had platinum-plus

albums and hit songs, he’s never won a Grammy.

But he says he’s not worried about winning awards, thanks to his youth football league. He said he’s proud he has been able to send young men to Division I schools to play sports and gain an education.

“That’s better than a Grammy right there,” he said.

He also said his proudest moment was seeing his son, who earned a football scholarship to UCLA, go to college.

“He’s first person in my family to actually go to college, so how do you think I feel?” he asked.

DROPPED CALL

Snoop admits he hung up on Dr. Dre when the rapper-producer reached out to him.

Snoop said Dre heard some of his music at a party and then called the young rapper to collaborate.

“Dr. Dre was like, ‘Who was that rapping?’” he recalled. “From that day he called me and I didn’t believe it, I was like, ‘Man, quit play-

ing.’ I hung up on him.”

Dre called Snoop back and they went on to produce rap classics, from “Gin and Juice” to “What’s My Name?”

“It was like magic,” Snoop said. “We built a bond. It was a brotherhood.”

GROWING UP

Snoop said when he burst on the music scene, he had many enemies.

“They went to Congress, Dionne Warwick and a bunch of people had my record on display talking about, ‘He’s the worst thing in the world,’ and they were really out to get me,” he recalled. “And I had to get past that because you have to understand, a lot of these people I looked up to as kids and they were hating on me and didn’t know me.”

Snoop said he didn’t let the backlash derail him and his mission as an artist.

“It rubbed me the wrong way and I was young and ambitious and gangster ... but as a man now, I don’t do that. I look at what they did, how they rubbed me the wrong way and I try not to rub my young homies the wrong way. I try to be for them and about them, and understand them and talk to them and communicate with them.”

Barry Manilow giving piano to NY school district

UNIONDALE, New York (AP)—Barry Manilow is giving a piano to a New York school district and he's urging others to donate musical instruments for schoolchildren to play.

Newsday reports that the 71-year-old Manilow is donating a piano to the Uniondale school district on Long Island.

The crooner is performing at the Nassau Coliseum in Uniondale on Friday. He's giving two concert tickets to anyone who

makes a donation of a new or gently used instrument.

Manilow says music is "a vital part of a child's education."

Uniondale Superintendent William Lloyd says he hopes Manilow's gift will encourage more donations and help students "build character to achieve success."

The donation is part of the singer's Manilow Music Project. Manilow says he started the project to help public schools with depleted music programs.

David Copperfield's rooftop pool ruptures, floods NYC penthouse

NEW YORK (AP)—Now you see it, now you don't.

The water in magician David Copperfield's rooftop pool vanished—and flooded his penthouse apartment as well as multiple floors of his New York City apartment building on East 57th Street.

Copperfield's attorney Ted Blumberg told the New York Post that a malfunctioning pump was to blame for the March 8 incident. He said the entire pool

drained through Copperfield's four-story apartment and others underneath it, soaking walls and floors.

Copperfield was performing in Las Vegas at the time.

Blumberg said the water spared Copperfield's collection of vintage machines from Coney Island.

He said the pool would be refilled after steps are taken to make sure a similar mishap doesn't happen again.

Shia LaBeouf's case to be dismissed if he avoids arrest

NEW YORK (AP)—A judge has told actor Shia LaBeouf that a disorderly conduct case against him will be dismissed and sealed if he avoids being arrested in the next six months.

A prosecutor told Manhattan Criminal Court Judge Ann Scherzer on Friday the "Transformers" star has completed a treatment program following a June arrest at a Broadway show.

Authorities charged LaBeouf with a violation after he smoked cigarettes, yelled at actors on stage and cursed at security guards while watching a "Cabaret" revival.

Representatives for the 28-year-old actor have said he's been treated for an alcohol problem.

LaBeouf said nothing to re-



Actor Shia LaBeouf, left, appears in Manhattan Criminal court with his attorney Robert Gage, Friday, March 20, 2015, in New York.

porters as he climbed into a black SUV following his brief

court appearance. Wearing a dark suit, he sported an eye-

brow piercing and a braided rat tail hair style.

Stephen King not backing down on demand for LePage apology

BANGOR, Maine (AP)—Horror writer Stephen King is proving to be as tenacious as some of his more sinister characters in seeking an apology from Maine Gov. Paul LePage.

LePage used his radio address

last week to make his case for eliminating Maine's income tax. He said states without an income tax, such as Florida, have lured away Maine residents, including King.

King quickly called out LePage, saying he winters in Flori-

da but his permanent residence is in Bangor, Maine, where he says he pays a boatload of taxes.

LePage has yet to yield to King's demands for an apology, and the author tweeted Sunday morning that "some guys are a

lot better at dishing it out than taking it back."

A revised version of LePage's address released Thursday no longer mentions King.

LePage's office has not responded to requests for comment.

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Country star Jason Aldean marries Brittany Kerr

NEW YORK (AP)—Country star Jason Aldean has married former "American Idol" contestant Brittany Kerr. A representative for the singer confirmed that the pair tied the knot Saturday in Mexico. They announced their engagement in September. The 38-year-old Aldean is one of the top-selling acts in country music. He filed for divorce from his wife, Jessica, in 2013. They have two daughters, Keeley and Kendyl. Us Weekly first reported the marriage.

Tracy Morgan not emotionally ready to watch TV tribute

NEWARK, New Jersey (AP)—Actor-comedian Tracy

Morgan still hasn't watched the tribute performed for him on last month's "Saturday Night Live" 40th anniversary show after he was badly injured in a car accident. An attorney for Morgan tells The Associated Press on Friday that the former "SNL" star isn't emotionally ready yet to watch the segment. Morgan's "30 Rock" co-stars Tina Fey and Alec Baldwin did a short piece sending him their support. Attorney Benedict Morelli says Morgan was "incredibly moved" by the gesture but hasn't watched the segment. A limo van carrying Morgan and several friends last June was rear-ended by a Wal-Mart truck on the New Jersey Turnpike. Fellow comedian James McNair was killed. Morgan suffered a traumatic brain injury,

broken ribs and a broken leg.

Slipknot guitarist charged in stabbing fight with brother

CLIVE, Iowa (AP)—Police say Slipknot guitarist Mickael Thomson has been charged in Iowa after a fight with his brother earlier this month in which Thomson was stabbed. Clive Police Department Chief Michael Venema said Friday an investigation found both 41-year-old Thomson and his brother, 35-year-old Andrew Thomson, were responsible for the March 11 assault that hospitalized the pair. Both have been charged with disorderly conduct by fighting. They're scheduled to appear in court March 30. Venema says the fight started inside Mickael Thomson's home and

moved outside, where the altercation became physical. Mickael Thomson sustained a stab wound to the back of his head. The brothers were taken to the hospital for non-life threatening injuries. The metal band Slipknot formed in the 1990s in Des Moines.

Hawaii's "Magnum, P.I." home sold to Obama's close friend

HONOLULU (AP)—A sprawling beachfront home used in the filming of the 1980s television show "Magnum, P.I." has sold for \$8.7 million to a close friend of President Barack Obama. An attorney for Marty Nesbitt said Thursday that his client bought the property. Seth Madorsky says Nesbitt didn't have any partners or co-investors in the deal. The 3-acre property is

in Waimanalo, next to the town of Kailua where the Obama family has spent the winter holidays in recent years. White House spokesman Josh Earnest said Friday that Obama was not behind the purchase. Tom Selleck's character lived in the house on "Magnum P.I." It was known as "Robin's Nest" on the show. Nesbitt is a Chicago businessman who served as treasurer for Obama's first presidential run. He is the chairman of the Barack Obama Foundation, which will build the president's future library.

Germany to return Nazi-looted painting from Gurlitt trove

BERLIN (AP)—Germany has signed a restitution agreement for a painting by Max Liebermann in a move toward return-

ing the work, seized under Nazi rule, to its rightful owner. Liebermann's "Two Riders on the Beach" was part of an art trove found in late collector Cornelius Gurlitt's apartment. Experts last year determined the painting was seized from businessman David Friedmann and rightfully belongs to his descendants. Culture Minister Monika Grütters' office confirmed a report in weekly Der Spiegel Friday that she signed the agreement, the first such accord for a piece from the Gurlitt collection. The agreement reportedly must be cleared by a Munich court handling Gurlitt's inheritance. A Swiss museum that accepted Gurlitt's bequest of his collection has promised to ensure any Nazi-looted pieces are returned to their Jewish owners' heirs.

Mom with breast cancer does not need shielding from life

DEAR ABBY: My wife has stage 4 breast cancer. She is only 51, and our most optimistic prognosis is three to four more years. Our children, 15 and 16, understand her disease, but don't really have a sense of how much longer we all have together.

Recently we went out to dinner, and the kids started talking about my retirement plans and their college plans. Later that night, my wife told me how sad it was hearing the kids talk about things she knows she will never see.

I have been debating whether I should have a talk with the kids and perhaps suggest they avoid subjects that make their mother sad. What do you think?

NOT TALKING ABOUT THE FUTURE

DEAR NOT TALKING: Before talking to your children, I think you should talk to your wife. Although your instinct is to protect her, I don't think you can. Sadness in her situation is normal. I'm sure if you were to ask her if she'd prefer the kids censor their remarks in front of her, she would tell you she wants to hear everything she can about what they are thinking.

When people have a terminal illness, they have a right to be sad when contemplating the things they will be missing—in your wife's case it will be seeing her children get married,

her grandchildren and more. Let your children express themselves fully with their mother, and if she's having a bad/sad day, listen and let her unburden herself. A joy shared is twice a joy, and a burden shared is half a burden.

DEAR ABBY: As a gift, my boyfriend, "Seth," gave me a Chihuahua puppy. I like dogs, but have never expressed a desire to have one. In fact, I have repeatedly mentioned my dislike for small dogs and that I wouldn't have a dog due to my travel schedule for work. I'd have to pay for food, veterinary care, toys, boarding, etc., and the dog would be alone in my apartment all day while I'm at the office.

Seth still chose to give me one. When I refused his gift, he yelled and left. My friends think I was rude, and that Seth was sweet for buying me a puppy. I tried explaining to them, but they were sarcastic and mean about my decision not to accept the dog.

This isn't the first time something like this has happened with Seth. For my birthday he bought me a smartphone, signed me up for a two-year contract and expected me to pay the monthly bill. I refused that, too. Am I wrong?

SIMPLE GIRL IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

DEAR SIMPLE GIRL: You and Seth appear to have a seri-

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



ous disconnect when it comes to communication. Is this the only area of your relationship in which he is tone-deaf? Your boyfriend seems to be the master of the "grand gesture," with no thought about the responsibilities his generous gifts will impose on the recipient.

Because you told him clearly that you dislike small dogs, he should not have forced one on you. In fact, he shouldn't have given you any living, breathing dependent creature without first having made sure it would be welcomed. You did the right thing—the humane thing—in not accepting the animal.

To receive a collection of Abby's most memorable – and most frequently requested – poems and essays, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. Shipping and handling are included in the price.

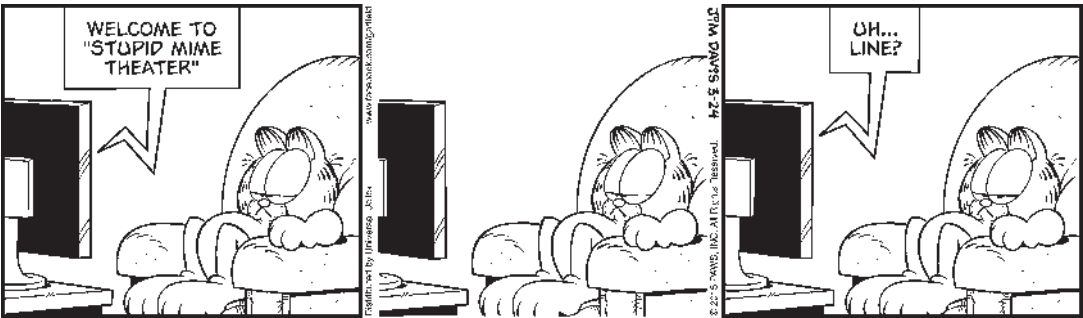
Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

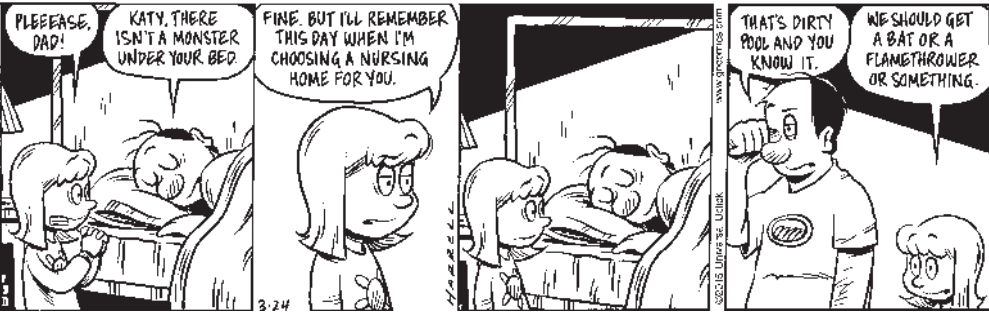


Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 "Little Women" woman

5 Timid

8 Lean-to

12 Operatic solo

13 Meadow

14 Troubadour's instrument

15 Avon product

17 Chills and fever

18 Type units

19 "A mouse!"

20 Garden intruder

21 Auto

22 Billboards

23 Future juniors

26 Police record book

30 Neighborhood

31 Seek damages

32 Corn Belt state

33 Henson's troupe

35 Piece of hardware

36 Firmament

DOWN

1 Batman

38 Struck, old-style

41 Disen-cumber

42 Petrol

45 California city

46 Oil-checking item

48 Grand story

49 Mimic

50 "Rule, Britannia" composer

51 Seven-day period

52 "Certainly"

53 Huffed and puffed

21 Blistex rival

22 Hearty quaff

23 "Casa-blanca" pianist

24 Tulsa sch.

25 Energy

26 Clear the tables

27 Anderson's "High —"

28 Ram's partner

29 Uncooked

31 Pigs' digs

34 — out a living

35 Lays down the lawn

37 Uses a paper towel

38 Passel

39 Sulk

40 Garfield's pal

41 Ready for the picking

42 Lass

43 Dermatologist's concern

44 Distort

46 Rotation duration

47 Bill

Solution time: 22 mins.

Yesterday's answer 3-24

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Peyton Manning, 39; Alyson Hannigan, 41; Jim Parsons, 42; Louie Anderson, 62.

Happy Birthday: Take a serious look at your work situation and consider how you can use your attributes to bring in more cash. Sticking to a budget while you put your plans in motion will be the best way to ensure your success. Use your ingenuity and persuasive tactics and someone with clout will offer assistance. Your numbers are 3, 10, 18, 24, 29, 37, 43.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Look over your financial situation and you'll find a way to cut corners or earn more. Contracts can be negotiated and deals put into place if you are persistent. Business functions will help you connect with someone who can influence your future. ***

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Make love, not war. Use your intuition, charm and compassion to find the right way to deal with anyone or any situation you face. Keep your response simple and mindful. Once you establish a solution, take action. ***

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): You will be determined to complete what you start, but be realistic or you'll face disappointment. You can make changes, but don't sacrifice when it comes to hard work and precision. Emotions will be hard to control. ***

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Don't make an impulsive offer that you will end up regretting. Spend your time doing things that make you happy or that will

enhance your skills and lead to greater earning power. Romance can improve your day and your personal life. ***

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Get involved in activities that will allow you to show off your talents and leadership ability. Make professional changes that will encourage you to use your social skills. Learn from experience and be persistent, and you will reach your goal. ***

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Take time to do something you enjoy. Shopping for something that will make you feel or look good will encourage you to be more social. Romance is in the stars and will lead to personal improvements with someone you think is special. **

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): You'll have lots of options to choose from. Partnerships will take a turn, but if handled properly, will put you in a much better position. Size up whatever situation you face at home and make adjustments that will bring you peace of mind. *****

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Don't be tempted by a deal someone offers. Joint ventures will be costly and will require insight, but if you choose to proceed alone, you will find the road to victory. Love is in the stars. Put time aside for romance. ***

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Your ability to get things done will put you in a good position. Don't let anyone slow you down or mislead you. A lack of honesty can be expected when dealing with others. Don't share personal information. ***

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Take one step at a time. Refuse to let anyone push you into something that makes you feel uncertain. Stick close to home and nurture your relationships with the people in your life who count. Make special plans for two. *****

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Consider what brings you the most happiness. Focus on reviving an old skill or looking for a position that allows you the freedom to do what you enjoy most. Don't let anyone discourage you from following your dreams. **

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Get together with someone you haven't seen in a long time. The more you get to share your thoughts with someone with whom you have a history, the closer you will come to finding the perfect solution to help you advance. *****

Birthday Baby: You are unique, inventive and dedicated. You are sensitive and empathetic.

Eugenia's website—eugenialast.com, Eugenia's android app @ <http://bit.ly/exhoro> and join Eugenia on [twitter/facebook/linkedin](https://twitter.com/eugenialast).

SUDOKU Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

Difficulty Level ★★

3/24

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

5	2	9	6	3	1	8	4	7
8	1	3	4	9	7	6	5	2
4	7	6	8	5	2	1	3	9
6	5	4	9	1	3	7	2	8
7	9	1	2	8	4	5	6	3
3	8	2	7	6	5	4	9	1
9	4	8	1	2	6	3	7	5
1	3	7	5	4	9	2	8	6
2	6	5	3	7	8	9	1	4

Difficulty Level ★★

3/27

WONDERWORD By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD. The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

CLUBBING IN VEGAS Solution: 8 letters

K V R A T S P D M R W C P D R
L C E R O I B A R S E A A I A
A I Y N V O R U T A T S R S B
T S G L U T A F L I I T C T
T U S H I E B A L C O N Y J S
H M T N T N S E L T O B O O
E I I A T V E U O O H E C H
V X H S E H C U C H A G K G
O C D G T O U R P H P K A E K
O M A R Q U E E O S D K R Y N
D S N K E T E C H N O A I A A
O R C N A D C R O W D S M W B
O I I W L O U N G E Z A H S P
P W N N L O C A T I O N N Y W
S E G A K R E D N E R R U S S

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Ages, Balcony, Bank, Bars, Bottles, Casino, Chateau, Couches, Crowds, Dancing, Disc Jockey, Drai, Drink, Ghostbar, Hakkasan, Haze, Hits, Las Vegas, Light, Lineups, Location, Lounge, Madhouse, Marquee, Martini, Mirage, Mix, Music, Outdoor, Party, Patio, Photo, Pick, Pool, Star, Surrender, Sway, Talk, TAO, Techno, The Voo, Tour, Tryst, Venue, VIP, Voodoo, Water, Wet, Wine, Wynn

Yesterday's Answer: Plan

To purchase THE COLLECTED WONDERWORD, Volume 35, 37, 38, 39, 40 or 41, order online at www.WonderWordBooks.com. (Contains 43 puzzles.)

STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

Duke beats San Diego State to reach NCAA Sweet 16



CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP)—Jahlil Okafor showed off all the moves—a spin, a dribble drive, a short jumper—that have made Duke's freshman big man possibly the nation's top player.

When he's playing like that, the Blue Devils have a shot to finish as the nation's best team right alongside him.

Okafor scored 18 of his 26 points in a dominating first half and top-seeded Duke beat San Diego State 68-49 on Sunday in the NCAA Tournament, sending the freshmen-led Blue Devils back to the Sweet 16 to continue their push for coach Mike Krzyzewski's fifth national title.

"It would mean the world to me," Okafor said. "I've always wanted to win a national title. ... That's what (the freshmen) came to Duke to have an opportunity to win a national title. That is where all of my focus has been this season and that is what it is still is."

Duke—holding a No. 1 seed for the 11th time in 18 seasons but its first since 2011—advanced to face fifth-seeded Utah in Houston's South Regional semifinals. The Blue Devils (31-4) reached the Sweet 16 for the 22nd time under Coach K, who said this group featuring four freshmen among its eight scholarship players is still improving.

"They're together," Krzyzewski said. "We have talent, we're getting older by experience, and so we just—we got better here these two games."

Fellow freshman Justise Winslow added 13 points and 12 rebounds for Duke, which shot 55 percent against the eighth-seeded Aztecs (27-9) two days after shooting 63 percent against 16th-seeded Robert Morris.

Okafor scored 21 on 9-for-11 shooting against the seriously undersized Colonials, then made 12 of 16 shots against the Aztecs—who had size to wrestle with him but no way to stop him.

"Okafor is a load," Aztecs coach Steve Fisher said. "He is hard to guard. ... But he's not the lone ranger. Winslow can play. They have a terrific team and they can play. They played like a No. 1 team today."

Winslow put on his own show with five assists, four steals and three blocks, one a jaw-dropper on JJ O'Brien at the rim. That set the ball loose in transition for Quinn Cook to bury a 3-pointer, then pretend to holster pistols as he turned to run back up the court—a sign that the Blue Devils were completely at ease and rolling with a confident strut.

EAST REGION Michigan State 60, Virginia 54

In Charlotte, North Carolina, Travis Trice scored 23 points, and Michigan State knocked second-seeded Virginia out for the second straight year.

Branden Dawson added 15

points and nine rebounds for the seventh-seeded Spartans, who advanced to the Sweet 16 for the seventh time in the last eight seasons under coach Tom Izzo. The Spartans will play the winner of the Oklahoma-Dayton game in Syracuse, New York on Friday.

Oklahoma 72, Dayton 66

In Columbus, Ohio, Jordan Woodard had 16 points and Buddy Hield scored 15, helping Oklahoma advanced to the second weekend of the tournament.

Coach Lon Kruger became the second coach to take four schools (Kansas State, Florida and University of Nevada Las Vegas) to the round of 16. Third-seeded Oklahoma (24-10) will play Michigan State on Friday at the East Regional in Syracuse, New York.

Louisville 66, Northern Iowa 53

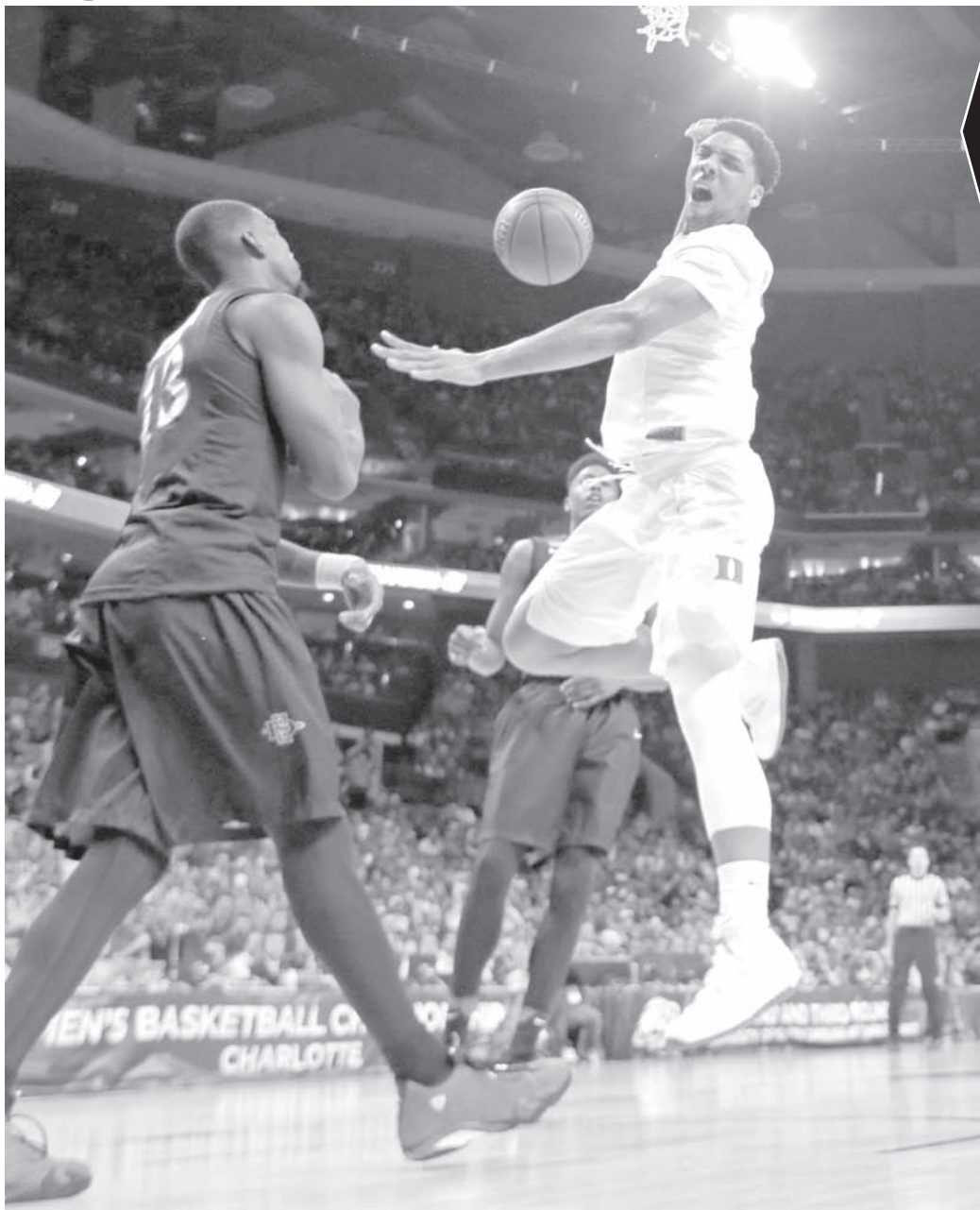
In Seattle, Louisville is headed to the Sweet 16 for the fourth straight year.

Terry Rozier scored 25 points to lead the fourth-seeded Cards to the victory. Montrezl Harrell added 14 for Louisville (26-8), including a couple of game-sealing alley-oop jams on passes from Rozier.

SOUTH REGION Gonzaga 87, Iowa 68

In Seattle, Kyle Wiltjer scored 13 of his 24 points during Gonzaga's flawless first half, helping the Bulldogs advance to the round of 16 for the first time since 2009.

After five straight departures on the first weekend of the NCAA tourney, Gonzaga (34-2) is back in the regional semifinals, thanks to an efficient



AP
Duke's Jahlil Okafor, right, reacts after a dunk against San Diego State's Winston Shepard, left, during the first half of an NCAA tournament college basketball game in the Round of 32 in Charlotte, N.C., Sunday, March 22, 2015.

West Virginia 69, Maryland 59

In Columbus, Ohio, Devin Williams had 16 points and 10 rebounds, and rugged West Virginia advanced to a Sweet 16 showdown with undefeated Kentucky.

Gary Browne scored 14 points and Daxter Miles Jr. had 12 as West Virginia reached the second weekend of the tournament for the first time since 2010, when it went all the way to the Final Four. The fifth-seeded Mountaineers (25-9) will take on the Wildcats on Thursday night in the Midwest Regional semifinals in Cleveland.

WEST REGION Wisconsin 72, Oregon 65

In Omaha, Nebraska, Sam Dekker scored 17 points for balanced Wisconsin, which beat Oregon in the round of 32 for the second straight year.

Next up for the Badgers (33-3) is a trip to Los Angeles to play fourth-seeded North Carolina in the Sweet 16 on Thursday.

Wisconsin played with the lead all game until Dwayne Benjamin tied it at 52 with a high-arching 3-pointer from in front of his bench with 5:27 left. But Dekker responded with a reverse layup and 3-pointer to make it 58-52.

offensive performance in the first 20 minutes that Iowa could never overcome. Domantas Sabonis finished with 18 points.

MIDWEST REGION Wichita State 78, Kansas 65

In Omaha, Nebraska, behind

another steady performance from Fred VanVleet and the hot shooting of Evan Wessel, the No. 7 seed Shockers rolled past the second-seeded Jayhawks 78-65 on Sunday, earning a trip to the Sweet 16 at the expense of the school that has caused them so much chagrin.

Tekele Cotton led the way with 19 points for the Shockers (30-4). VanVleet finished with 17 and Wessel hit four 3-pointers and scored 12, sending the Missouri Valley champions to Cleveland for the Midwest Regional semifinal against third-seeded Notre Dame.

Matt Every wins Bay Hill for 2nd straight year

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP)—Matt Every had a tongue-in-cheek response when he heard Tiger Woods was not ready to play the Arnold Palmer Invitational this year. He said he told Woods, "Don't worry, man, I'll hold it down for you until you get back."

He did that and more.

Every was dressed in a blue shirt, not red, but the moment sure looked familiar on the 18th green Sunday at Bay Hill. He made an 18-foot birdie putt for a 6-under 66, gave an abbreviated fist pump and held onto the trophy for one more year with a one-shot victory over Henrik Stenson.

"You watch tournaments on TV and guys make a 20-footer on the last and everybody goes nuts," Every said. "It's cool to close one out like that."

Every rallied from a four-shot deficit last year for his first career victory, helped in part by Adam Scott's collapse in the final round.

This one was even sweeter.

Every came from three shots

behind Sunday by matching the low score of the final round, and he was never seriously close to bogey on the back nine on his way to another handshake with Palmer and another trip to the Masters.

Needing a birdie to force a playoff, Stenson was wide left on a 20-foot putt at the 18th.

"It feels great," Every said about his return to Augusta National. "When Henrik missed that putt, that was the No. 1 thing on my mind: 'You're already in. Miss it - I need to get in.'"

Stenson was angry with being put on the clock on the 15th hole—the second time the final group was out of position—and closed with a 70 to extend a peculiar streak on the PGA Tour. It was the ninth straight tournament in which a 54-hole leader failed to win, and the Swede let this one get away.

He regained the lead with birdies on the 11th and 12th

holes as Morgan Hoffmann began to fade, and Stenson had a one-shot lead until a three-putt bogey from 45 feet on No. 15 and a three-putt par from 40 feet on the fringe at the par-5 16th.

"Really, problems kind of started on 15," Stenson said. "We got on the clock again, which when you're coming down the stretch you want to be able to have five extra seconds."

He said he rushed his first putts on the 15th and 16th, and the three-putts were "really what cost me the tournament."

Every finished at 19-under 269 and became the first player since Payne Stewart in 1987 to win at Bay Hill with all four rounds in the 60s.

A year ago, Every missed a 4-foot par putt on the 18th hole and had to wait a nervous 10 minutes to see if anyone could catch him. This time, he had no room for error. With a

confident swing that held up all week, he drilled his drive down the left side of the fairway and hit his approach above the hole to set up his birdie.

He said he heard one man in the gallery saying between fake coughs, "Straight putt."

"I was like, 'This guys is a real (expletive) if he's lying, because it's a pretty important putt,'" Every said. "I looked over it pretty hard and I didn't see anything. It was a great putt to have under pressure, because I literally had to get it going. It wasn't going to come up short. The last 3 feet I was begging for it to hang and I was like, 'Gosh, these are the one that always lip out. Be so cool to see this one dive in.' And it did."

He joined Woods and Loren Roberts as the only players to repeat at Arnie's place. Woods won four in a row, and back-to-back on two other occasions. Roberts, like Every, won his first two PGA Tour titles at Bay Hill.

Matt Jones birdied three of his last four holes for a 68 to

finish alone in third.

Hoffmann had a two-shot lead after a birdie on the eighth hole, but it was a struggle the rest of the way. Stenson caught him on the 11th, and Hoffmann made bogey on his next two holes to fall three shots behind. He hit his tee shot out-of-bounds into a backyard on the 18th hole for a double bogey and a 71 to finish fourth.

Rory McIlroy, in his final tournament before he goes for his third straight major and the career Grand Slam at the Masters, closed with a 70 and tied for 11th. The world's No. 1 player had only one round in the 60s in his three events on the Florida swing.

"The main goal was to come here and try to win," said McIlroy, who played Bay Hill for the first time. "Couldn't do that. At least I got a couple of things out of this week, which is good."

Zach Johnson holed a 5-iron from 207 yards on the par-5 16th for the second albatross in two days, after no one had made a 2 on a par 5 since Bay Hill began in 1979.



Griffin helps Clippers beat Pelicans, 107-100

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Blake Griffin scored 23 points, Chris Paul had 23 points and 11 assists, and the Los Angeles Clippers put a crimp in the New Orleans Pelicans' playoff hopes with a 107-100 victory on Sunday.

J.J. Redick scored 20 points and DeAndre Jordan finished with 16 rebounds and 12 points, helping the Clippers win their fourth in a row. They converted 18 Pelicans turnovers into 30 points and had a 25-6 advantage on second-chance points.

Anthony Davis led New Orleans with 26 points and 12 rebounds in 39 minutes after missing two games with a sprained left ankle. Tyreke Evans was sidelined because of the same injury and was replaced in the starting lineup by Norris Cole, who had 12 points before fouling out in the final minutes.

Former Clipper Eric Gordon, coming off the bench for the first time in 49 games this season, had 23 points and five assists in 37 minutes. Coach Monty Williams took him out of the starting lineup because he was late for a team meeting. Quincy Pondexter started at shooting guard instead and finished with 12 points.

The Pelicans have lost four of their last five games following a 9-2 stretch. They are three games behind Oklahoma City for the eighth and final playoff spot with 12 games left on their schedule. The Thunder beat Miami 93-75 on Sunday.

The Pelicans missed their first six shots of the fourth quarter before slicing an eight-point deficit to 85-83 with Norris Cole's two free throws, Luke Babbitt's 15-footer and Davis' fast-break dunk with 7:25 to play. But the Clippers responded with a 16-8 spurt fueled by Griffin's eight points and six by Redick, extending the margin to 101-91 with 3:13 remaining. New Orleans got no closer than six after that.

Gordon paced New Orleans to a 53-50 halftime lead with 14 points, including a pair of 3-pointers 37 seconds apart that triggered a 10-0 run in the final 2:03 of the second quarter. The Pelicans made their first seven shots and raced out to an 11-point lead before the Clippers pulled ahead for the first time, 27-26, on a 3-pointer by Hedo Turkoglu in the final minute of the first quarter.

Thunder 93, Heat 75

In Oklahoma City, Russell Westbrook had 12 points, 10 rebounds and 17 assists for his 10th triple-double of the season to lead Oklahoma City.

Enes Kanter had 27 points and 12 rebounds for the Thunder, who have won three in a row. Rookie Mitch McGary scored 14 points, and Anthony Morrow had 12.

Kanter was expected to miss his second straight game with



AP
Los Angeles Clippers' Blake Griffin, left, grabs New Orleans Pelicans' Anthony Davis during the second half of an NBA basketball game, Sunday, March 22, 2015, in Los Angeles.

an ankle injury. But he was cleared to play after morning shootaround, and then got off to a fast start with 15 points in the first quarter.

The Heat had five players score in double figures. Hassan Whiteside had 13 points, all in the first half, and Goran Dragic, Dwyane Wade and Mario Chalmers each scored 12.

Cavaliers 108, Bucks 90

In Milwaukee, LeBron James scored 28 points and sparked a key second-half run with an emphatic dunk to lead the Cavaliers.

J.R. Smith added 23 points for Cleveland, which has won three in a row. Smith made three straight 3s to close out the Cavs' decisive run that turned a six-point deficit into a 93-78 lead with 6:19 left in the game.

Milwaukee has dropped six in a row.

Giannis Antetokounmpo had 15 points and nine rebounds for the Bucks. The lanky forward muscled his way to the bucket against James early in the game to help Milwaukee build an 11-point lead.

James had his way late. His dunk off an offensive rebound got the Cavs going. He finished 10 of 17 from the field and grabbed 10 boards.

Spurs 114, Hawks 95

In Atlanta, Tiago Splitter scored a season-high 23 points, Kawhi Leonard added 20 points and the San Antonio Spurs won their third straight game.

Paul Millsap finished with 22 points and Dennis Schroder had 18 points for Eastern Conference-leading Atlanta, which dropped its third in a row.

Boris Diaw scored 15 of his 17 points in the fourth quarter, and Danny Green added 15 for San Antonio, which never trailed and took its biggest lead at 26 early in the third.

The Spurs, playing their fourth straight game with key reserve Manu Ginobili nursing a sprained right ankle, contested nearly every Hawks shot and pass, but no Atlanta player looked more flustered than 12th-year guard Kyle Korver.

Raptors 106, Knicks 89

In Toronto, DeMar DeRozan scored 23 points, Tyler Hansbrough added a season-high 18 and the Toronto Raptors won for the third time in four games.

Jonas Valanciunas had 17 points and 10 rebounds, Lou Williams scored 13 and Greivis Vasquez had 12.

Lance Thomas scored 24 points and former Raptor Andrea Bargnani had 16 for the Knicks, who dropped their third straight and lost for the 10th time in 12 games.

Toronto point guard Kyle Lowry, who dressed but did not play in Friday's loss at Chicago, was inactive because of a sore back suffered in a fall against Minnesota last Wednesday. Vasquez made his second straight start in Lowry's place.

New York guard Alexey Shved, who came in averaging 22.0 points in his previous three

games, suffered bruised ribs in a collision with Toronto's James Johnson in the first half and was unable to return. Shane Larkin replaced Shved to start the third quarter. Shved finished with nine points in 17 minutes.

The Knicks also lost rookie Travis Wear to a sore back in the fourth.

Pistons 105, Celtics 97, OT

In Boston, Andre Drummond had 18 points and 22 rebounds, Kentavious Caldwell-Pope scored seven of his 27 points in overtime and Detroit beat Boston.

Reggie Jackson added 17 points, 11 assists and nine rebounds for the Pistons, who won for the third time in four games after a 10-game losing streak.

Evan Turner had 23 points and Jae Crowder 19 for Boston, which lost its third straight. The Celtics are in a tight race for the Eastern Conference's eighth and final playoff spot.

Detroit snapped an eight-game road losing streak, sending Boston to just its second home loss in its last 11 games.

The Pistons wiped out a deficit late in regulation, then scored on their first two possessions of overtime and opened with a 7-0 run.

Suns 98, Mavericks 92

In Phoenix, Archie Goodwin sank the go-ahead 3-pointer, Markieff Morris added a critical jumper in the final 30 seconds and Phoenix beat Dallas.

Dallas rallied from a 17-point, third-quarter deficit and was up 86-80 with 5 minutes to play. But the Mavericks went four minutes without scoring while the Suns climbed back into the lead.

Eric Bledsoe had 20 points, nine assists and six rebounds for the Suns. Morris added 19 points and 13 rebounds.

Chandler Parsons scored 19 points and Amare Stoudemire 16 for Dallas, which has lost all three games against Phoenix this season. Monta Ellis was 4 for 22 from the field, including six straight misses down the stretch.

Nuggets 119, Magic 100

In Orlando, Fla., Danilo Gallinari scored a career-high 40 points and former Magic guard Jameer Nelson came off the bench to ignite a big rally for Denver.

Gallinari made 12 of 21 shots, including six 3-pointers, for the Nuggets, who broke a three-game losing streak.

Nelson finished with 15 points, 13 during a 43-12 run over a 10-minute span of the first half which gave the Nuggets a 63-37 lead.

Victor Oladipo led the Magic with 21 points and Nik Vucevic scored 20. Elfrid Payton, who on Friday night became the first NBA rookie in 18 years to record two straight triple-doubles, finished with six points, eight rebounds, eight assists and five turnovers.

The Nuggets broke an 11-game losing streak against Eastern Conference opponents on the road.

Kings 109, Wizards 86

In Sacramento, Calif., Rudy Gay scored 26 points and Sacramento led most of the way in beating Washington for its second straight victory.

DeMarcus Cousins had 20 points, seven rebounds and five assists despite foul trouble. He had missed the previous two games with a strained right calf.

Sacramento stretched its lead to 20 points in the third quarter and was never threatened from there in winning back-to-back games for the first time since late November.

Bradley Beal scored 19 points for the Wizards, but John Wall shot only 3 of 10 and had nine points and eight assists.

Washington has dropped 11 of 13 road games since beating the Lakers on Jan. 27. The Wizards have lost two of three on a four-game trip that ends Monday against Golden State.

Hornets 109, Timberwolves 98

In Minneapolis, Mo Williams scored 24 points, Michael Kidd-Gilchrist and Al Jefferson each added 18 and Charlotte moved into eighth place in the Eastern Conference.

Gerald Henderson added 17 points for the Hornets, who snapped a three-game skid.

Gorgui Dieng led Minnesota with 16 points and Kevin Martin had 15 points and nine assists.

His team down by 13 in the first half, Williams provided a spark off the bench with his smooth shooting, just as he did in many of his 41 games with the Timberwolves this season.

Williams shot 10 for 16 from the floor in his first game at Target Center since the Wolves traded him to Charlotte on Feb. 10.

Lakers 101, 76ers 87

In Los Angeles, Jeremy Lin scored a season-high 29 points, and Los Angeles beat Philadelphia in the first meeting of the season between two of the NBA's worst teams.

Thomas Robinson had 14 points off the bench for the 76ers, who shot just 36 percent and were outrebounded 52-39.

The 76ers, coming off home victories over the Pistons and Knicks, haven't won three in a row since a four-game stretch that began with a road win over the Lakers on Dec. 29, 2013.

Philadelphia took a 75-74 lead into the fourth quarter but missed 12 of its next 13 shots while Lin fueled a 20-4 run that gave the Lakers a 94-79 cushion with 4:19 to play.

Lizama grabs U18 top ranking

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER



Luther Lizama took away the co-ed U18 top ranking from Colin Ramsey following his division win in the 15th PIC Tennis Championships held early this month at the Pacific Islands Club hard courts.

Counting the 1,000 points he got from the PIC tournament, Lizama now has earned 2,400. He collect 400 and 250 points from the singles and doubles events in the Tan Holdings Tennis Classic last December and 750 points in last month's Coconut Tennis Classic after finishing runner-up to Ramsey in the boys U18 singles finale. The Saipan International School bet avenged his loss to Ramsey last month after downing the latter, 7-5, 6-2, in the round-robin PIC competition.

Ramsey settled for second with his 2,250 points after three tournaments. He earned 500 in the singles and doubles events in the Tan Holdings, 1,000 in the Coconut Tennis Classic, and 750 in the PIC contest.

Joining Lizama and Ramsey in the Top 3 was Moris Villanueva, who missed the PIC tournament and now has only 1,600 ranking points. Villanueva was at the No. 1 spot in the age group after the first competition of the 2014-2015 season as he gathered 1,000 points in the Tan Holdings event and



ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Luther Lizama, seen here returning a shot to Colin Ramsey in last month's Coconut Tennis Classic, leads Northern Mariana Islands Tennis Association's co-ed U18 rankings.

600 in the Coconut Tennis Classic.

Completing the Top 10 rankings in the division are Woo Sun Cho (1,350), Michael Ren (1,000), Tommy Choi (750), Mikayla Lopez (600), Negahr Rastguiy (500), Steven Lee (500), and Haruya Eda (100).

In the girls U18, Carol Lee retained the top spot after beating rival Mikayla Lopez in this month's tournament. Lee has earned 2,000 points with the other

1,000 coming from her victory over Lopez in last month's Coconut Tennis Classic. Lopez has collected 1,500 for back-to-back runner-up finishes to Lee, while Rastguiy rounded out the Top 3 with her 1,100 points.

Isabel Heras (500), Tania Tan (300), Ami Tsukagoshi (300), and Julia Ishikawa (300) are also on the list.

Meanwhile, rankings in the other age groups will be reported later this week.



Dangol



Tammy



Yanai

3 Tsunami Saipan swimmers set records

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER



Tsunami Swimming Center Saipan's Ashley Dangol, Miku Tammy, and Kaito Yanai earned record times in the 2015 SSC International Invitational Swim Meet held this month at the Kan Pacific Swimming Pool.

Dangol set six new age group records in the girls U8 division, while Yanai and Tammy achieved one and two age group marks, respectively.

The 8-year-old Dangol posted three of her six age group records in the freestyle swim. Her 37.17 seconds in the 50m freestyle surpassed her own mark (37.24 seconds) registered on Jan. 24, 2015. In the 100m freestyle, Dangol eclipsed the 1:25.97 of fellow Tsunami Saipan swimmer Nanaka Watanabe, as the former

logged 1:21.84 in the meet held from March 12 to 14. Another Watanabe record fell, as Dangol posted 3:00.82 in the 200m freestyle event to break the former's 3:10.30 set on May 31, 2014.

Dangol's three other age group marks were made in three different strokes. In the 100m backstroke, she erased another Watanabe record (1:41.39/Oct. 4, 2014) after timing in at 1:34.68. In the 200m individual medley, Dangol's 3:16.13 was around 16 seconds faster than the previous record of Watanabe (3:33.41/May 31, 2014), while the former reset her own mark in the 100m butterfly (1:53.71/May 30, 2014) after clocking in at 1:31.98.

On top of her record-breaking swims in the three-day meet, Dangol got the high-point award in her age group after collecting 63 points and dominating 10 other participants.

In the boys 15 to 16 age group, Tammy finished only fourth in the

high-point award, but highlighted his performance in the three-day meet with record swims in the 100m and 200m breaststroke races.

In the 100m breaststroke, the 15-year-old Yanai tallied 1:10.38, chopping off around a second from the previous age group mark (1:11.22) which he registered on Dec. 13, 2014. In the 200m breaststroke, Yanai posted 2:33.33 to shatter the nearly eight-year mark of many-time CNMI National Team member Rezne Wong. Wong logged the previous record (2:34.84) on March 29, 2007.

In the 11 to 12 age group, Tammy's lone age group mark came from the 100m backstroke. She timed in at 1:16.97 to break her own record (1:17.30) made on Dec. 13, 2014.

Meanwhile, two more age group marks fell during the annual tournament and these and other individual results will be reported later this week.

tle in the 45 to 49 age group with Japan's Hitoshi Maeyama posting 6:28:31 (40:45, 3:26:44, and 2:21:02) to down compatriot Satoru Matsuda, who submitted 8:26:22 (40:53, 3:49:59, and 3:55:30).

In the 50 to 54 and 55 to 59 divisions, the winners were Hiroaki Kuwahara (7:04:12) and Alex Oviedo (6:05:47), respectively, while another Japanese

bet, Yoshiji Tanaka, took the top honors in the 60 to 64 age group. Tanaka timed in at 7:19:16 to beat fellow Japanese Toru Terauchi (8:27:22) and Yasuomi Kondo (8:37:05).

In the women's division, Reiko Okamoto was the only non-pro entry and completed the longer race of the day in 7:29:55 after earning split times of 44:45, 3:51:46, and 2:53:24.

Titans still on top despite loss

The Abyss Titans suffered an 8-7 loss to the Jokers Wonderpool Aces last week but remain on top of the Budweiser-Saipan Billiards Association Thursday Open 8-Ball League.

The Titans enjoy a two-win advantage over their sister team Rack 'N' Roll, Wild Bill's, and Route33 Alamo Car Rental, which hold similar 57-48 slates. Lurking behind them are the

The Wonderpool Aces (50-55), Jonny's Team SCS (49-56), Barcode Hobbies Deadshot (48-57), Barcode Breakers (37-68) complete the standings.

The Deadshot and Rack 'N' Roll also scored similar 8-7 wins over Team SCS and Alamo Car Rental, respectively, while the Homeboyz and Magic 8 Ball both pulled off 11-4 decisions against the Breakers and Team SCS.

In the Tuesday League, the Smoke

Pub Armatech Hustlers and the Jokers IT&E Voyagers continue to occupy the top two spots after posting wins over separate opponents.

The Hustlers downed the Abyss Crazy 8, 10-5, while the Voyagers duplicated the feat against the Smoke Pub Str8 Shooters with the same score.

The Smoke Pub Destroyers swept the last three singles 8-Ball events in completing a 9-6 win over the Abyss Homeboyz II.

Week 8 action in today's matches in the Tuesday League will have the Voyagers facing the Destroyers, while the Hustlers take on the Str8 Shooters, while the Homeboyz II battle sister team Crazy 8.

In the Thursday League on March 26, the Deadshot host the Magic 8 Ball while the Homeboyz visit the Wonderpool Aces and Team SCS collide with the Titans. The Barcode Breakers take on Alamo Car Rental and Wild Bill's meet Rack 'N' Roll. (Jon Perez)



7-RUN

From Page 28

Little Falcons 17, Little Padres 1

Aven Evangelista pitched a complete game, while catcher Jack Reyes went perfect at the plate in the Talaabwog Little Falcons' victory.

Evangelista lasted five innings as the game was cut short by the mercy rule. He gave up an earned run, a homer to Terrance Babauta, on two hits with seven strikeouts and one walk.

It was Terrance Babauta's third homer this season and first of the outside-the-park variety. Jathan Babauta had the Little Padres' other hit, a double in the fifth.

Reyes went 4-for-4 for the Falcons scoring twice and had two triples.

Comets 12, Ol'Aces 1

Reid Teregeyo pitched three shutout innings before allowing the Ol'Aces to score what was their team's lone run in the game.

Teregeyo gave up a triple to Jordan Babauta, who reached home plate on a Joaquin Fleming fielder's choice in the bottom of the fourth.

Teregeyo surrendered two hits, fanned eight and walked one batter.

LEINA

From Page 28

vitational after enjoying the opening round lead.

She ended up tied for 10th with University of Missouri-St. Louis's Joana Yanez in the Las Vegas Desert Classic, the Lady ThunderWolves' first tournament in RMAC's 2014-2015 spring season, with a 36-hole tally of 13-over 157.

The CSU-Pueblo junior bounced back at the Midwestern State Invitational where she kicked off her title bid with a 1-under 71 to join West Texas A&M University Buffaloes bet Whitelee Woods atop the standings.

But she limped with a 9-over 81 against the par-72, 5,843-yard layout at Wichita Falls Country Club in Wichita Falls, Texas to drop to second place with a final tally of 152 to lose the individual crown by one stroke to West Texas's Glory Jangthongsir.

Kim, despite the loss, recorded the

JUNIORS DIVISION Falcons 15, Red Sox 3

Kobe Lifofoi and Leo Salalila combined for seven runs as the Falcons handed the Red Sox their third straight loss.

Salalila went 3-for-4, all singles, with three runs while Lifofoi scored four times on a 3-for-4 batting stint with an RBI-double in the Falcons' five-run second inning rally.

Arby Yoquel pitched four innings allowing one earned run on five hits with five strikeouts and two walks, while Jester Kintaro pitched two shutout and hitless innings retiring three batters.

Fielders 7, Enforcers 6

Neidreyton Skirei doubled and scored the winning run on a walk-off error, reaching home plate after Lawrence Fleming overthrew to first base.

Skirei scored three runs and had a double in a 3-for-4 appearance at the plate.

Tyrese Camacho tossed six innings, four in a shutout, giving up five hits, fanning five and walking three.

Kimo Aingalen closed out for the Fielders with Lloyd Tarope having a leadoff walk but was tagged out while attempting to steal third base. Gloyd Martin had a fielder's choice while Peter Litulumar struck out and the game ended when Pedro Maratita grounded out on a 6-3 putout play.

tournament's best scoring average on par-4 holes with 4.10 and posted seven birdies, the most in the event.

It was Kim's fifth weekly conference honor giving the Lady ThunderWolves a record sixth award this season. CSU-Pueblo senior Julie Sanchez earned the accolade on Oct. 2.

Kim topped four of the five events on the RMAC calendar to bag for Golfer of the Week honors.

She ruled the Samuel Proa Insurance Lady Wolf Pack Invitational, West Texas A&M Lady Buff Invitational, Colorado Christian Invitational, and the Mustang Women's Fall Intercollegiate last year.

Kim also ended up tied for third place in the RMAC #2 Tournament along with Sanchez and Cha Cha Willhoite of the Metro State University Roadrunners.

The Lady ThunderWolves continue their title campaign when they play at the Mustang Intercollegiate set on April 3 and 4 in Goodyear, Arizona.

PRESTLEY

From Page 28

se Mendoza tallied 6:50:02 (44:11, 3:08:47, and 2:57:04) and prevailed against Japan's Takefumi Yamashita, who recorded 7:36:13 (41:07, 3:49:23, 3:05:43).

There was also a two-person bat-

Swim Leg of 2015 Tagaman Triathlon

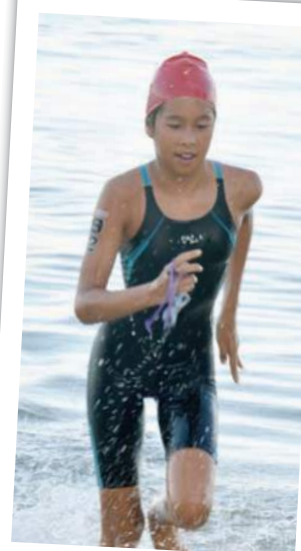
PHOTOS BY ROSELYN B. MONROYO



From left, Mamiko Berger, Ayumi Sato, Tomomi and Atsuko Sato, and Kaoru Takahashi pose for a group photo before the start of the swim leg of last Sunday's Tagaman Triathlon in the waters off the Pacific Islands Club.



Swimmers pile up at the start of the swim leg.



Saipan Swim Club's Jin Ju Thompson runs to the finish line after completing the 1.5-kilometer swim leg for the Olympic distance course.



Austria's Carina Wasle leads a small group of pros heading out to the swim-bike transition area.



David Boyer, left, and Rinto Takahashi get out of the water.



PIC's Glenn Policare directs swimmers for the second lap of the 1.9-kilometer race.



Saipan's Kaity Mattos gets out of the water to go to the swim-bike transition area.



Tyce Mister runs toward the shore.



Australia's Ben Allen removes his wet suit to get ready for the bike leg of last weekend's race.



Two individuals take pictures of Christian Villacrusis, who was first out of the water in the Olympic-distance division.



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State to reach
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28 TUESDAY, MARCH 24, 2015

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

7-run 5th inning helps Twins end skid

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

The As Matuis Twins used a seven-run fifth inning barrage in completing a 13-9 win over the Jets in the Majors division of the Saipan Little League on Sunday at the Miguel Basa "Tan Ge" Pangelinan ballfield.



It was the Twins' first win after eight games this season while keeping their opponents winless in eight matches.

Elery Castro and Nixon Smith shared pitching duties for the Chel Castro-managed team, combining for two earned runs on two hits with 10 strikeouts and 11 walks.

Smith closed out for the Twins grounding the Jets in the bottom of the sixth. He quickly retired Dylan Salalila and Froilan Camacho before walking Ryder Alvarez.

Alvarez, however, was left stranded on base after Smith struck out John Paul Sablan, who homered in the fourth.



JON PEREZ

The As Matuis Twins' Nixon Smith pitches to Charley McDonald of the Jets in their Majors division game last Sunday in the Saipan Little League at the Miguel "Tan Ge" Basa Pangelinan baseball field.

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Prestley stands out in Tagaman

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Saipan's Peter Prestley emerged as the top non-pro finisher in the Half Ironman event of last Sunday's 2015 Tagaman Triathlon.

Prestley broke the six-hour barrier in the 1.9-kilometer, 90K bike, and 21K run race and was the lone non-pro triathlete to do so after timing in at 5:32:18.

The 40-year-old Prestley went on to top the 40 to 44 age group, besting four other entries. He defeated fellow Saipan bet Ken Pierson (6:02:48), Korea's Sang Yoon (6:09:11), and two more Saipan residents Goshi Sato (6:22:52) and Ernie Moises (6:40:18).

Prestley, who came from back-to-back races in the Philippines to prepare for Tagaman and XTERRA Saipan, posted the 13th best time in the swim race held in the waters off Pacific Islands Club after clocking in at 33:45. Thirty-three took part in the two-lap swim race.

In the bike race, which started at

PIC, brought riders to the Airport Road and the "four corners" in Marpi (Suicide Cliff, Banzai, Bird Island Look-out, and Grotto) and back to PIC (via Beach Road) before going to the American Memorial Park for the transition, Prestley submitted 2:52:40. He was the only non-pro triathlete to barge into the Top 10 in the bike leg, which Russia's Aleksandr Doroskikh won (2:19:50).

In the bike run, which had participants running from AMP to PIC and back, Prestley registered 2:05:53, which was also good for 13th place overall.

Meanwhile, 12 others survived the Half Ironman event of the road race.

Saipan's Erico Castro was the youngest finisher at 16 and won the U19 division with his 6:35:34 and split times of 42:04, 2:59:01, and 2:54:29.

In the 30 to 34 age group Japan's Kazuya Yamaguchi was the lone entry and timed in at 6:24:30 (41:40, 3:39:27, and 2:03:23).

In the 35 to 39 division Guam's Jes-

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Saipan's Peter Prestley negotiates the uphill road in front of the old Nikko Hotel during the 90K bike race of last Sunday's 2015 Tagaman Triathlon.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO



CSU-PUEBLO

Leina Kim, left, fell short in her title bid in last week's Midwestern State Invitational but earned her fifth Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference Golfer of the Week honor.

Leina earns 5th RMAC women's golf honor

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Leina Kim collected her fifth Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference Women's Golfer of the Week award despite falling short of claiming the title in last week's Midwestern



State Invitational. Kim, according to the Colorado State University-Pueblo Lady ThunderWolves website, finished second in the Midwestern State In-

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